

T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F
L A V I N I A R A W L I N S .

I n T w o V O L U M E S .

V O L . I .



L O N D O N :

Printed for the EDITOR;
And Sold by W. OWEN, at *Temple-Bar*.
M D C C L V I .

(Price Bound Six Shillings.)




Taylor fund
2 vols

45-97
3047
51



THE EDITOR'S PREFACE.

 I was not long after I had been inducted to the Living of *F——m*, in the County of *Lancaster*, that I perceived myself to be ever most welcome in the Family of *—— W—b—y*, Esquire, a Gentleman of a plentiful Estate in those Parts; but more especially, I found myself so to his Lady, who would frequently sit the whole Afternoon with me, questioning and receiving my Solutions upon various Passages in the Scriptures, and other abstruse Points of Divinity; and I never met with a Lady in the whole Course of my Life, so sincerely inquisitive after, or a more uniform Practiser of every known Virtue.

The EDITOR'S PREFACE.

By the Time that I had continued these Conferences with her for about two Years, as we were one Day discoursing upon the present Times, the Licentiousness of the Youth of both Sexes, and what sad Examples young People had daily before them; Mrs. *W—b—y* told me, that she had then by her an Instance, from whence it had been most apparent to her, that the most upright Morals were not a Defence against the Encroachment of Vice, where the Example of Companions, and Opportunity, offered for defacing them: Nay, that associating one's self to such, would not only pervert all former good Impressions, but even the Will would thereby assimilate itself to Debauchery, and Profaneness.

She then produced to me, from her Cabinet, a large Bundle of Letters, with the Copies, and Draughts of several others; all of which, the Reader will find herein after inserted.

Upon casting my Eye cursorily over some of them, I own, my Inclination tended strongly towards making myself Master of their whole Contents; and for that Reason, I begged the Favour of her to lend them to me, that
I might

The EDITOR'S PREFACE.

I might examine them seriously in my own Study ; but I found her unwilling to part with them out of her own Custody ; for she told me, that tho' from our long and continued Friendship, she could permit me to read them in her House, without expecting me to make a wrong Application of what I should find therein, yet should they but casually fall into other Hands, Reflections might be raised, injurious, possibly, to her Character, for the Continuance of a Correspondence so long, with Persons she could not but be ashamed of after. So full a Disclosure of their Proceedings, as themselves had from time to time made to her ; but however, as they were regularly placed according to their Dates, I might then amuse myself as long as I pleased with them, and whensoever I should think it worth my while to pursue the Story, they should be forthcoming at my Service.

I found them so interesting upon the Perusal, the further I waded into them, that I could not be at Rest till I had gone through with them.

I then told her, that the Treasure she had so carefully conserved from public Notice, would in my Opinion, far
more

The EDITOR'S PREFACE.

more redound to her own Honour, and the public Emolument, by Exposure, than from Imprisonment thus in her Cabinet.

She still seeming unwilling to part with them, I soon convinced her, that recent Examples wrought much more forcibly upon the human Intellects, than the most elaborate Precepts; adding, that as I could plainly perceive, she would not readily consent to a personal Exposure upon the great Theatre of the World, as an Actor in the Scene we were debating upon, Matters might easily be so managed, by publishing the Facts under feigned Names, or by Initials only, as by no Means, to leave her a respectable Agent in them.

I told her further, that considering the Original of her Acquaintance with the young Ladies, commenced during the most virtuous Demeanour and Morals on their Part, as well as her own; and that, as it at Length had arrived to such a peculiar Regard for, and Intimacy with each other, I was apprehensive, she could no Ways have been dispensed with from advising them in the best Manner she was able, and from continuing her Endeavours for reclaim-

The EDITOR'S PREFACE.

ing them, as also her Assistance in their Distresses, all which, Christian Charity demanded from her, notwithstanding the vicious Courses they had unfortunately involved themselves in.

Having at Length, through the Force of my Perswasions, over-bias'd her to permit me to print the following Correspondence; she by Degrees, conceiving the Utility it might be of, became no less zealous for the Undertaking than myself; and in order to introduce the Epistles themselves with Propriety to the Reader, she then made me the following prefatory Relation of her own Life and Family. Now, tho' I at first propos'd to have published this as from myself, yet, upon second Thoughts, as the Letters themselves must run in the first Person, so I rather chose to make her Account of herself, do the same.

I must give my Reader this Caution, that none of the Surnames he will hereafter meet with are real; tho' several of them may be some ways similar to those of the Parties themselves; for as the Fact itself is so recent, had true Names been published, it might have cast that Reflection upon several good
Fa-

The EDITOR'S PREFACE.

Families, which every prudent Man, in like Case, would studiously avoid.

Let but the youthful Part of my female Readers peruse the following Sheets without Prejudice, and intent upon profiting thereby, if they fairly may; and I will be responsible for their good Effect; for I can assure them, nothing therein represented, exceeds the real Facts; nor are they so extraordinary, as not to be suspected for the Lot, of whomsoever may give Way to similar delusions.

Hoping therefore, that the full Benefit I purpose from exhibiting the following Correspondence may ever attend the Publication,

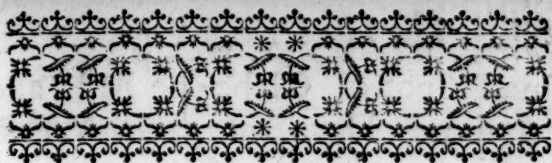
I am, the Reader's

Well-Wisher,

G. D.



T H E



T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F
L A V I N I A R A W L I N S .



Y Father, *Mark Rawlins*,
was a beneficed Clergy-
man in the West-riding
of *Yorkshire*, where his
Living was so inconsiderable, as
(with what little he could pick up
by Gardening at Home, upon a
VOL. I. B small

small Spot of Glebe he had, and by some Days in each Week, overseeing the like Employ for a neighbouring Gentleman, the Esquire of our little Village) to afford but a very scanty Provision for his Family; which consisted of a Wife, two Sons, and three Daughters, of whom I was the youngest.

My Mother was a very plain well-meaning Woman, one, who in early Life, had been taken in as a Companion to Mrs. *Robinson*, our 'Squire's Lady, when she was single, and had continued with her, till her Marriage with my Father; neither did Mrs. *Robinson* in the least abate her Regard for her afterwards; nor was she ever better pleased, than when she could engage my Mother at her House.

Tho' I have just said that my Father had the Management of Mr. *Robin-*

Robinson's Garden, and to that have attributed part of his Subsistence; I would not have it so understood, that my Father was an hired Labourer, and under a stated Pay; but he having studied the Theory of Gardening in general, and from his Youth upwards, exercised himself as much as most Men, in practical Experiments upon Plants, was esteemed by far, the most knowing Operator that Way, in all the Country; and best qualified for directing others, in the manual Part of that Science; nor was his Pains, bestowed in the 'Squire's Grounds, less rewarded, than had he laboured for a stipulated Pay; but much more so, from the frequent Donations he received on that Score.

Mrs. *Robinson* had been my Godmother, and having no Children of her own, about the

Time of my seventh Year, condescended to take me home to her; where she clothed me, and becoming exceeding fond of me, shewed equal Regard to my Education, as if I had been her own Child; by which Means, I had an Opportunity of behaving myself in every Respect, as if I had been born to a good Fortune, and infinitely beyond what my Parents could afford for their other Children; nay, such a Favourite was I esteemed, both by Mr. *Robinson* and his Lady, as I grew up, that it was on all Hands agreed I should be their Heir.

I was not much turned of sixteen, but was tall for my Age, when having made a Trip into *Lancashire* with my Patrons, for a Month, upon a Visit to a Relation of Mrs. *Robinson's*, a young Gentleman of that Country fell in love with

with me. He was but just come of age, and had newly taken Possession of a paternal Estate of fifteen hundred Pounds a-year, which all lay surrounding an old, but elegant Mansion, having for some Generations been the Family-Seat of his Ancestors; and so eager was he in the Pursuit of me, that after a Display of the most polite Behaviour imaginable to me, in public, at length gaining an Opportunity of half an Hour in private, he made me a Tender of Marriage, as the next Morning, unconditionally, meerly to avoid the tedious Ceremony of an Application to Mr. *Robinson*, (I having told him, that whatever Fortune any Husband could expect with me, must be wholly dependant upon his Pleasure) for he insisted, that his own Estate being an ample Provision for us, he should ground no Expectations upon Mr. *Robinson's*

son's Generosity, equivalent to the Delay such a Procedure must necessarily occasion to his Desires; and still pressed me to a Consummation out of Hand.

The many Favours I had received from Mr. *Robinson* and his Lady, and the Concern they had ever expressed for my Welfare, would by no means permit me to engage for the Disposition of my Person, unknown to them; nor could any of my Lover's Rhetorick prevail against the Duty I owed to them: For I alledged, they were to me as Parents, and wishing me to the full as well, I could never consent to so material a Transaction as that of Marriage, without their Concurrence and Approbation.

When Mr. *Willoughby*, (for that was the young Gentleman's Name) perceived me to be fixed in that Resolution, and that it would

would be impossible for him to overcome it, he made his Application to Mr. *Robinson*, for his Consent to make me his Wife ; but met with a more violent Repulse, than I must own, I could well have imagined he would ; nay, that he might have no further Opportunity of Conversation with me, though Mr. *Robinson* had but just before purposed our Stay for another Week, he ordered his Coach for the next Morning, and taking Leave of his Relations, we returned home.

I presume, my Case was not peculiar, nor myself the only young Woman, who, having surrendered her Heart to the Call of her first Admirer, could not at the Nod of a By-stander, pleasurably, recall it again ; for there is that Prejudice implanted in the Virgin Heart,

in Favour of the Suitor who first distinguishes her from the Herd of Females, for the Mark of his Affection, which no little Struggling can efface.

I must confess, I retreated under a Set of the most melancholy Reflections I had ever harboured for my whole Life before; the Offer made me by Mr. *Willoughby*, being so far above all that my warmest Wishes could have prompted me to expect, that I even despaired of ever meeting with the like again; and as, when the Mind is distressed to any severe Degree, it soon shades over the Countenance with the dark Outlines of its Discomposure; so both Mr. *Robinson* and his Lady took notice, how more than usually dull I appeared; and she, took upon her to demand the Reason of it.

I blushed at her Request, wishing from my Soul, I had been released from the Coach, that I might but have gained an Opportunity for indulging over my Grievs in private. I could scarce restrain the Tears from gushing forth at the Apprehension of what they thought of me, and of the Woes which were still to succeed : When Mr. *Robinson* answered, my dear *Lavy* (for my Name being *Lavinia* they always called me so) has left her Sweet-heart behind her ; but she is a good Girl, nor shall it be long before she is provided of another, I can promise her ; I have had him for some time in my Eye for her, and I'll tell thee, *Lavy*, said he, turning to me, who he is. You know my Nephew *Charles*, Child, he will have a better Estate than Mr. *Willoughby* at the Death of his Father, whose Infirmities will

soon oblige him to surrender it. Now as I wish you as well as my own Child, and as he must naturally be my Heir, by taking him for your Husband, you will then *both* be my Heirs, and have the whole Family Estate: For as I am unwilling, for thy Sake solely, to prejudice my Nephew, or thee, for his; so by giving him his Option of my Estate with you, and you of his Father's Estate with him, I shall not only answer my own Views in you both, but likewise the Call of Justice.

Mrs. *Robinson*, who had never before been let into this Scheme, seemed highly to approve it: For Mr. *Charles* was no mean Favourite of her's, or indeed, any less than I was; and certain I am, she wished me equally happy, as if I had been her own Daughter; but I was told, that Mr. *Charles* must

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 11

must perfect his Studies, before he could have Thoughts for Matrimony; and that indeed, it would be Time enough some Years hence, for either of us to engage in a State of such Sollicitude.

I must own, I could not so readily accord to their Sentiments, having no less a Notion of a good Settlement in Life, than Mrs. *Robinson* herself. As to the Figure I might have made in that Station, Time only would have proclaimed my Actions immeritorious, or deserving of the Rank of Mr. *Willoughby's* Lady; and as for any Thing else, I took myself for the best Judge of my own Qualifications.

Mr. *Robinson* having now discovered his Intentions to me, we frequently spoke of the Match between me and Mr. *Charles* as a Certainty, only waiting time for

for the legal Consummation ; but yet it cost me no few penfive Thoughts, when I reflected on the disinterested Views of Mr. *Willoughby*, and, but for the Imputation of undutifulness to my Patrons, I would rather have yielded myself to the Arms of my first Lover, with barely a Sufficiency to have preserved us from mere Want, than to those of Mr. *Charles*, or any other Man, in the Possession of a Principality ; but the Dread of offending my gracious Benefactors still prevailed for my Submission to their Disposition of me.

The Time had now lingered on for about five Weeks, when that dear Man Mr. *Willoughby*, unable longer to tolerate my Absence, arrived at Mr. *Robinson's*, to renew his Suit to him on my Behalf. I saw him alight at the Gate, as I was sitting at Work at my Chamber-Window, from whence
my

my Eyes followed him into the House. My Heart would have hurried me down to him; but hoping I might soon be sent for, I flew to my Drawers, and snatching thence such Things as might place me in the most agreeable Light before him, I had prepared myself in a Trice for the Summons.

I had waited near two Hours under this Expectation, and indeed, grew the more easy at the Protraction of the Time, in Hopes, that the dear Man had brought Mr. *Robinson* to some Capitulation, and that they were then digesting the Treaty, before it was to be notified to me; but after the Joy I had conceived from these vain Ideas, when I saw Mr. *Willoughby* take Horse again, and depart without the least Sight of, or Conference with me, I verily thought I should have gone distracted; as
it

it was then near Dinner-time, and I expected every Minute to be called down to it, the Dread of discovering my Inquietude to the Observation of my Patrons, gave a Check to that Sorrow, I could with Eagerness have discharged in a Deluge of Weeping; though I survived, but upon the Prospect of indulging myself in it, so soon as I should be obscured from the Family-Eye again.

Neither Mr. *Robinson* nor his Lady, had the least Suspicion of my Knowledge of Mr. *Willoughby's* Visit, or ever intended they to have mentioned it to me; but self Consciousness, supplying the Place of an hundred Witnesses, though I strove to the best of my Capacity to screen my Anxiety from their Observation, it was soon too visible, to admit in them, the least Hesitation, that somewhat sat heavily on my Mind; which

which they no sooner suspected, than the usual Question followed, of what made me so dull to Day?

I could have smothered the Embers of my Passion, whilst I might have been permitted the Retention of it in my own Breast; nor, had they burnt me to Atoms, would I have given them vent, voluntarily; but when the Cause of my Perturbation was inquired into, and my Spirits set on a Ferment, I could not, to have gained the World, have made an unruffled Answer to their Demand; for the Over-charge of my Heart, bursting forth at my Eyes, I fell into such an Agony of crying, as greatly distressed them both to behold me in; nor had I the Power to resist it but for a Moment, to hearken to the Indulgence of their Expressions to me.

Mr.

Mr. *Robinson*, little doubting the Occasion of my Tears, and suspecting, that in his Presence, I could not so readily disclose my Sentiments, as to his Lady alone, left the Room; when that dear Woman, under little less Torture than myself, taking me in her Arms, and almost drowning me in her Tears and Caresses; my dearest *Lavy*, said she, why will you rack me thus by your Uneasiness, without assigning the least Cause for it? Speak! dear Child! said she, speak your Mind freely to me, and whatever my Power can extend to, shall be administered to your Comfort. Dry up your Tears, Child, look upon me, added she, as your best of Willers; in Tendernefs, a Mother; in Council, a Friend; and in your defenceless State, a Protector. Speak! I say, and let my dear Girl

Girl pour out all her Woes into my Bosom.

The Gentleness, wherewith the dear Lady treated me, would have left me inexcusable, had I not yielded to her Importunities: So that recollecting myself a little, and as much as possible, dissipating my Confusion; I first intreated her own and Mr. *Robinson's* Pardon, for the Excess of my Behaviour before them, and then excused it as well as I could, from my Inability to have acted otherwise: For O! my dear Madam! said I, had but your own Soul been as loaded as mine, you must have discharged it in the same Manner. It is not Obstinacy; it is not by Way of Opposition; it proceeds not from Unwillingness to comply with every Precept of yours and Mr. *Robinson's*, that afflicts me thus; but, dear Madam! it is what I have this Day seen,
that

that has dispirited me to such a Degree, as must break my Heart in the Conclusion.

My dear *Lavy*! Why all this Preface? said Mrs. *Robinson*, tell me what distresses you? Answer me sincerely, have you seen any body here to Day whom you did not expect? I have not, replied I. Then tell me, said she, the Cause of your Discomposure. Madam! said I, I have seen Mr. *Willoughby* here to Day, it is most certain; but far be it from my Conscience to say, that I expected him not. Is it possible? Madam, that one can love, intensely love, and not attempt to gratify it? That Mr. *Willoughby* loves me, and that intensely too, I have no Difficulty to believe; then could I conceive he would never seek after me? but why, when so near me, in the very House with me, and for Hours too, he should quit it again with-

without a Sight of me, torments me to unravel.

My dearest Child! said Mrs. *Robinson*, you well know how much more beneficially Mr. *Robinson* purposes to dispose of you; and tho' Mr. *Willoughby* may have, and I doubt not has a Value for you, yet a young Woman of your Age is not to give Ear to every Pretence of Love from whomsoever may offer it. It is enough that you are certain of being most elegantly provided for in Life by Mr. *Robinson's* Means; and since he is pleased to interest himself so far as to procure you as ample a future Establishment, as a Lady with twenty thousand Pounds to her Fortune hath a Right to claim; the least you can do on your Part is, most cheerfully to condescend to his Nomination of the Person. He is a young Gentleman no ways exceptionable, but rather such an one as

no

no young Lady upon Earth can take Shame to herself at calling Husband; wherefore my Dear, let Mr. *Robinson* have no more Difficulty in this Affair; for I perceive it gives him no little Uneasiness; take Care then how you make a Foe of the best Friend you have in the World, Child!

I begged her Pardon, for having created any the least Disturbance to Mr. *Robinson*; and assuring her, that neither he or she should have a future Occasion for condemning my Conduct, in dissenting to whatever they should determine, she seemed thoroughly pacified; and I believe she represented me to Mr. *Robinson* in the most favourable Light; for that he never once took farther Notice to me of the Passages of that Day, and all seemed intirely made up again; but it was impossible for me to depart from my Thoughts of Mr. *Willoughby*, every
of

of whose Sentences in my Favour, founded daily as sensibly in my Mind, as his Speech, being present, would have penetrated my auditory Faculties. As for him, I was sure he loved me; but for Mr. *Charles*, whether he did, or might ever be so induced to do, was to me a Matter of much Question; but submit I must, for my so absolute Dependance upon Mr. *Robinson* forbade my disputing his Commands, since I was to be enriched at his Pleasure, however contradictory to my own. These, I would think were hard Lines, whenever I could steal a Moment to myself, for Reflection.

It was scarce six Months after this, before I heard of Mr. *Willoughby's* Marriage to a young Lady with a Fortune of ten thousand Pounds. I must acknowledge my Affection was still so lively, as not
to

to have relinquished all Hopes that somewhat might still have started in my Favour, whereby my own Union with him might not have proved wholly disagreeable to my Patrons; but now his actual Marriage to another proved such a Rub in my Way as was never to be surmounted.

It now became so much my own Interest to close in with Mr. *Charles*, that my whole Force was exercised in expelling Mr. *Willoughby* from my Mind. What I might have been, it was too late then to feed my tortured Fancy upon, when what I was to be hereafter, claimed my whole Attention; and as what was passed was also past Recal, so I joined in with my most seeming Concurrence, to such Measures as Mr. *Robinson* had proposed to me.

Neither Mr. *Robinson* or his Lady were much turned of forty; but having been seventeen Years married

ried without having any Children, they had now given over all Manner of Expectation of that Blessing, and being both of robust Constitutions, expected no less than to arrive at an hearty old Age together; but Mrs. *Robinson* taking Cold one Night after dancing, and neglecting the necessary Precautions for its Removal, a Fever ensued, which in a few Days carried her off.

What a fatal Stroke would this have proved to me? nay, I should scarce have supported myself under it, had not Mr. *Robinson*, from the Instant of his Lady's Death, received me still more deeply into his Affection; for he was now become so fond of me, that it was even painful to him to have me out of his Sight; nor was the least thing directed in the Family to his Liking, but what passed under my Sanction. He never visited without me, and I received

all his Company at Home, having in every Respect equal Authority with his late Lady ; being not only Mistress of his Family, but of his Purse too ; and save only that we kept separate Beds and Apartments, I was no ways to have been distinguished from his Wife : So that my Condition being, if possible, more felicitous than in Mrs. *Robinson's* Life-time, the Thoughts of her were too soon worn out of my Remembrance.

His Lady dying in the Autumn, Mr. *Robinson* propos'd spending his Winter at *York*, that by the Confluence of Company in that City, he might divert his Reflections from his Lady. He took me with him, dress'd me much more elegantly than usual, and we frequented all Companies together ; he ever stileing me his Daughter, and Heir, insomuch, that my constant Appearance as such, soon influenced

fluenced my own Heart to conceive of myself, as well as the best of them; but yet a certain Meekness of Disposition which had ever been natural to me, restrained me from many Flights, which accompany Girls of a more vivacious Flow of Spirits at my Years, under the unlimited Conduct of their own Wills: Tho' had I been otherwise disposed, yet Mr. *Robinson* was so blind to all the Failings that might be in me, that whatever I had done would have pleased him.

We returned home, after a Stay of about four Months; from which Time, tho' I could by no Means discover a Reason for it then, Mr. *Robinson*, to my thinking, behaved more reservedly to me than at any Time since his Lady's Death. He coveted to be more alone than was customary, nor delighted he so much in my Society as he had been used to do; said but little,

had left off his jocosè Way of accosting me, and in short, took daily less and less Notice, either of myself, or any other Thing relative to the Family; insomuch, that could I have expected a Continuance of it, the Alteration was so disagreeable it would have broke my Heart; but taking it only for a temporary Evil, I bore up pretty patiently under it, till at the End of three Weeks from our Return, he ordered out the Chariot, and was absent from me four Days.

This was so unprecedented a Thing that it dejected me prodigiously, nor did his Return minister the least Relief to my Perplexity: for whenever I forced Speech to him, or would have behaved as formerly, he seemed under Pain till he had avoided me; and about a Fortnight after I lost him again for some Days. In this Manner we
lived

lived near three Months; when upon his Return Home, after some Days Absence, late in the Evening, he proceeded directly to his Chamber, without either asking for, or seeing me; and the next Morning he sent for me to come to him.

I must say, that after what had passed I approached him not without some Trembling; and was about to have delivered myself in somewhat of a studied Speech, for discovering the Occasion of his Discontent, when he prevented me by a Demand of all the Keys he had intrusted me with, and an Account how his Cash had been disposed of. I then expected he had some Suspicion of my having defrauded him, or at least that I had been too liberal of his Money; but as I had been instructed from my Infancy, to keep a regular Account in Writing of every Penny I dis-

bursed, I had my Accounts ready to a Farthing, and was under no Difficulty of clearing myself from the Imputation of Fraud; but before I could form a Reply, he told me, he was about to make Alterations in his Household, and that intending as the next Week, to introduce a Mistress to his Family, he would have me collect my little Matters together and return to my Father's.

A Pistol-Shot, discharged into my Brain, could not have levelled me with the Earth more expeditiously than that undoing Sentence; for scarce had it fully sounded in my Ears before I fell, extended like a lifeless Corps, and happy had I been, as I often after thought, had I then acted the Reality.

Mr. *Robinson*, who from the prior Regard he had borne me, could not shake of the Relicks of his Affection so suddenly, was struck to
the

the Heart with Concern at my Condition. He called the Servants about him, and committing me to their Care, ordered all to be done for me that was possible; which proved so effectual, that at Length I recovered; but never was so happy as to see him more while I staid in his Family: For avoiding me all that Day, he sent me Word the next Morning, that the Chariot would be ready at Eleven o'Clock to convey me to my Father's.

It was the Chambermaid who delivered the Message, which had very near occasioned a Relapse, but rousing up my Courage, I intreated her to return to Mr. *Robinson*, and to beg my Permission for taking my Leave of him, that I might render him due Thanks for all his past Favours before I went. She did so; and informed me, that

having communicated my Request to him, he was in such a Commotion, that turning from her, he wept like a Child, nor could he answer her for some Time; and when he did, it was with his Back towards her, and only to tell her he should see me no more.

Having made this unsuccessful Effort, I, by the Maid, returned him Thanks for all his past Kindnesses; and assured him, that, my Prayers should ever be for his Prosperity: Then resolving not to make use of the Chariot, I bundled up my Clothes and Linen in two Parcels, and with one under each Arm, made the best of my Way to my poor Father's; but such a Meeting as we had, can never be forgotten by me. I clapt my Bundles upon the Table, just kissed my Father, and being too heart-ful for Utterance of my Complaint, fell
back

back into a Chair behind me, and was fainting away again.

My poor Father not knowing what to make of me, but seeing my Clothes upon the Table, suspected no less than my having been guilty of some enormous Crime, that should have driven me from a Family who had taken such Delight in me; for after such Expressions of Tenderneſs as they had ever used to me, what less could he surmise (as he thought) could have given room for so sudden an Expulſion? However, he refrained from Reproaches, till I was recovered for responding to such Questions as he purposed to demand of me. This soon happening, he then began to question me, as to what I had been guilty of, that should have irritated Mr. *Robinson* so much against me as to have expelled me his Family? for that, he said, he presumed to be the Case, from the

Incident then before him ; that no trivial Offence would have moved him to it, he was most certain ; and charged me to declare the whole Truth to him, without the least Palliation, that he might, if possible, mitigate Mr. *Robinson's* Anger, and get me reinstated.

My dearest Father, replied I, your unjust Censures operate with more Severity upon my Mind, than all the Unkindnesses of Mr. *Robinson*. Is there no Possibility of being driven from once a generous Benefactor, but from some criminal Cause of one's own ? If there is not, I must be guilty ; but if there is, as I have ever been studiously cautious of giving Offence to him or you, by the Unblamableness of my Conduct hitherto, why must somewhat culpable attributable to me, take the first Stand in your Imagination ? why form you no Conjectures of Mr. *Robinson* as well

as of me? Is it impossible for him to err? but as I am now able to utter myself, know Sir, that till Yesterday, I had not the least Conception of this Rejection. I then told him all that had happened, affirming it for Truth; and this he imbibed so advantageously for me, that he for a long Time wept over me most tenderly; said it was the Lord's Will, and must be borne with by us.

My Father went into Mr. *Robinson's* Garden the next Morning as usual, in Hopes of an Opportunity of some Conversation with him on my Behalf; but shameful of what he had done, nor chusing to confront my Father, upon observing him there from one of the Windows, he sent his Footman to inform him, that having hired a very expert Gardiner, he would not have my Father further trouble himself to appear there.

The poor old Man was so abashed at the Receipt of this Message from the Mouth of a Servant, that turning from the Fellow, without a Word of Reply, he quitted the Garden, and walked home again, ashamed even to declare himself to me, to have been the Object of so contemptuous a Message; nor could I for a long Time, draw from him the Cause of his Chagrin, till after repeating my Request. Alas! my Child, said he, we are both fallen under the Frowns of Fortune. My Income, thou knowest how small it is; even beneath that of a Day-labourer; and my Extra-support is now banished; but still, *Lavy*, added he, the same Hand which raised the Sheep, the Ox, to tread the Pastures, and in Return to yield their Flesh and Fleeces for the Service of Man, raised also the Corn, to feed both them and us,
and

and by his Liberality in the Increase of this, hath rendered it attainable by almost all his Creatures; from those to this then, must we descend, my dear Child; our Maker formed us not to starve us, and he will still preserve us, tho' it be on Bread alone.

The old Gentleman wept so as almost to have split my Heart to see him; he recommended Content to me in every Condition; be sober, be virtuous, be honest, be chaste, said he, and sooner or later, Providence will reward you amply for it.

My Mother had been dead some Years, and my Brothers and Sisters were all out at Service, in different Parts of the Kingdom. My poor Father (having no other Companion with him than a poor elderly Woman, who for the Sake of her Subsistence, performed all the little Offices of his Family) hearing me

4 talk

talk of going to Service too, that I might not become an insupportable Burden to him, assured me, that as I had received my Education hitherto in a gentlewomanlike Manner, if I would lay my Hand to his Affairs, and act therein as his Housekeeper, I should never leave him, provided I could submit to his Manner of Living; for he desired me not, he said, to act the Part of a laborious Servant, but that of an houswifely Mistress.

My Father, then parting with his old Woman, we lived together almost two Years, in all the good Harmony imaginable; tho' my Thoughts could not be wholly restrained from divers Excursions to my former Way of Life, and from forming Comparisons, between the present State of my Affairs, and what Mr. *Willoughby's* Love, had I encouraged it, would have introduced me to; but After-thought
was

was useless; I was now pinned down to the Station I must live and die in, and therewith I was resolved to be content.

There was a Widow-Gentlewoman, a near Neighbour of ours, who, with one Daughter and a Niece, both much about my Age, lived very retired, upon a small Income which was to continue for her Life only; with these two young Ladies, I formed a most peculiar Intimacy, insomuch that either they were at my Fathers, or I with them daily, where we spent most of our Time in reading, by Turns, to each other, after the necessary Labours of our several Families were performed: for as I for my Father, they for their Mother and Aunt, went through the Whole of the household Affairs.

Frequency of Intercourse, and Similitude of Circumstances, had knit us into so sacred an Alliance,
that

that no Sort of Privacy could confine itself to the Breast of either of us, as incommunicable to the whole Sisterhood ; neither did they condemn me for so implicitly depending on Mr. *Robinson's* Friendship, as to have declined the generous Offer Mr. *Willoughby* had made me, when by an Attachment of myself to him, I might have gained, in Certainty, so noble a Settlement in Life, as few young Ladies of Fortune could prudently have refused ; whereas, whatever I could have expected from Mr. *Robinson*, being to commence in Future, could at the very best, but prove precarious ; and indeed, I must say, that my Condescension to the Will of my Patron, had almost daily cost me some Tears.

We had scarce lived thus happily together for two Years, before Mrs. *Morris* (that being the Name of the Widow I have mentioned)
dying

dying, my two Companions, Miss *Sally* her Daughter, and Miss *Gatty Coningsby* her Neice, were both under the most dismal Apprehensions for their future Support; and frequently consulting thereon with me and my Father, the most we could resolve these Prospects into, was a Service in some sober Families.

As Mrs. *Morris* had been obliged to live to the full Extent of, or even beyond her Income, to maintain them, it was not to be expected she should leave any thing behind her, nor indeed did she, save a small Parcel of old and worn out Furniture, of but very inconsiderable Value, and some mean wearing Apparel; most of which, the young Ladies having disposed of, my Father, for my Sake, took them under his Roof for a few Weeks, till they could otherwise dispose of themselves, to Advantage.

Their

Their future Behaviour in Life being our daily Topic, and no Places offering in the Country, they at last came to a Resolution, with about fifteen Pounds a piece in their Pockets, and a small Change of Clothes, of making the Tour of *London*, in Search of Places, under a Certificate of my Father's, of their Education, Family, and Behaviour in his Parish, from their Infancies to that Time ; and this was all the Recommendation they had to depend upon for their good Reception in Town ; not having, to their Knowledge, a single Relation, or even an Acquaintance there. Now as this Journey had afforded us Matter of Discourse so long before it happened, so we entered into the most solemn Engagement never to omit any good Turn, in the Power of either, to perform for the other, let what would happen to us ; but by a constant Correspondence

dence by Letter between us, to inform each other of every the minutest Turn our Affairs should take; and having thus mutually agreed, entering the Waggon for their Journey, we were parted.

I bore up tollerably well under the Adjustment of their Resolution for this Journey, esteeming myself happy in the poor Habitation of my Father, which still afforded me a Support, tho' much inferior to what a good Place would have done; but then, the being Mistress of myself, and of my own Time, proved a Counterbalance to almost every other Inconveniency.

I had ever thought my Lot sufficiently happy, till the Departure of my two Friends; but no sooner were their Backs turned upon me, and all Prospect of future Consolment with them was vanished, than sinking into a most desponding Way, I grew almost dis-

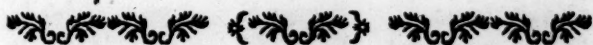
distracted at the Reflection of my past Disappointments.

Why, would I say to myself, have I thus been made the Sport of Fortune? The Humility of my Mind, was originally, but correspondent with my Parentage, nor had I engaged in Servitude under more Regret than my Brothers and Sisters have already done, who are all happy in that Condition. Why then was I alone selected for a Lady? Why fostered up in a Degree it must never be my Portion to attain to? Why laid Mr. *Willoughby* that glorious Scene before my View? and why was I diverted from it, under a Prospect of more apparent Grandeur? Was it but to raise my Hopes to the sublimest Pitch, that the Fall might be more terrifying to me? Am I marked out from the whole Race of Womankind, for all the keenest Darts of Fate to fix on? Alas! it must be

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 43

be so, being now both hopeless, helpless, and friendless.

It was not much above a Fortnight after my two dear Companions had left *Yorkshire*, before I received a Letter from them. I say it was from *them*, because tho' wrote but by *Sally*, it gave me an equal Account of *both*. It was as follows.



L E T T E R I.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins, in Yorkshire.

September 2, 1740.

Dearest Lavy.

COSIN *Gatty* and I were so melancholy after we parted from you, and abounded with such shocking Apprehensions, first of
leav-

leaving you behind us, next of our Journey, and then how we should dispose of ourselves in so strange a Place as we feared we should find *London* to be, that we were just ready to die with Horror at the Thought of it, for the three first Days of our Journey; for having not a Soul with us, and ourselves being each so dispirited, we were exercised in little else but crying for the whole Time. O! had we been blest with a third Person, of our own Sex, to have spirited up a Conversation amongst us; and had that third Person been our dearest *Lavy*, how happy should we have thought ourselves!

At *Grantham*, we took up an old Woman, with her Son and Daughter. The Boy, was going Apprentice to his Uncle, a Carpenter in *Goodmans-fields*, and the young Woman, to the same Place,
only

only till she should hear of a Service.

From the Introduction of this Set of Gentry to us, our Affairs began to wear quite a new Face : For having some of our own Sex to converse with, we grew more lively, and our Time went on far less heavily, than before, as to Silence, with which we had hitherto been mostly tormented, there was now no such Thing, for the whole Day ; unless when the old Lady happened to nod a little : For her retentive Memory of past Transactions, though ever discharging, was not, in all probability, half exhausted before we arrived at our Journey's End, nor would she then quit the Waggon, though often called to, till she had finished the current Story.

Having, as she hinted to us, been such a notable Lady in her Time, her generous Principles

4

were

were such, as inspired her with a Readiness, for communicating the whole Fund of her Excellencies to others. We had neither Room nor Occasion, for the least Use of our own Tongues, during any Part of her wakeful Hours. Nay, so addicted had she been to the Spirit of foretelling, that scarce any past Transaction, she said, had been accomplished, but as she had said, or Thought.

We were let minutely into the History of her several Courtships, with three different Lovers, who were afterwards all her Husbands, and all since deceased; her Number of Children, Sons, and Daughters; the Times she had at their several Births, and how they were all at present disposed of ;together with the foolish Part, *Betty*, her Daughter, our then Fellow-Traveller, was about acting, with a Journeyman Plaisterer, if she had not hurried

hurried her into the Waggon with her, for *London*: For to be plain, she said, her Daughter would otherwise have married him. We were all sensible, she said, that at best, he could never expect to rise higher in Life, than a Master Plaisterer, and what was that, for so fine a young Woman as *Betty* to depend upon? Now, she herself, had a Sister, fifty Years ago, who only went Servant, to *London*; and in five Years Time, married her Master's Son, and died the Wife of a *topping* Grocer in *Whitechappel*; then why might not *Betty* do every whitt as well for herself, in such a Place as *London* was.

In short, her Tongue was never silent, whilst the least Breath of Wind was stirring, to work it; so that we could only judge of *Betty* by her Looks, for the first Day of her Travel with us, but they were
so

so significant, as to assure us, she greatly regretted the Loss of the Plaisterer.

The next Day, we mounting the Waggon very early, the old Lady had talked herself down before Breakfast, and was snoreing away for a Recruit; and now we were entertained by the young Cub, her Son, as arch a little Rascal as ever breathed: For *Betty*, sitting very pensively, and dropping now and then a Tear, as she thought privately; *Dickey*, for that was the Lad's Name, eyeing her, set up a sham Cry, as if he wept bitterly. *Gatty*, having Compassion on the Boy, in order to comfort him, asked, what made him weep so lamentably? When in a whining Tone he replied, because he had left his Sweet-heart behind him, which he feared, would break his Heart.

Betty

Betty, taking the Joke as designed upon her, began to rate him heartily, giving him several harsh Names; which increasing soon into a violent Scold, awakened the old Woman; who from that Instant, taking the Discourse into her own Hands, silenced both the contending Parties at once.

Thus, my dear *Lavy*, passed our Time, with little Variation, till we arrived at our Inn, in *Aldermanbury*, as they call it.

Lord, my Dear! This *London* is a strange Place, as ever I saw in my Life. We lay at our Inn the first Night, and the next Morning, hearing we wanted Places, our Landlady recommended us to an Office near *St. Paul's Church*, where you may have what Place you will, they say, for a Shilling; so we went, and set down our Names,

and one of the young Men of the House went with us, and brought us back again to the Inn, where we now are, only waiting to hear of our Places.

I thought you would be pleased to hear we got well to Town, and how we go on; and when we are in Place, you shall know how to direct to us. I wish we could both get into one Family. Pray, give our Service to the good Doctor, and thank him for all Favours; so hoping you are well, as we both are at this present Writing, I am,

Dear Lavy,

Your loving Friend,

SARAH MORRIS.

LET-

L E T T E R II.

*Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Miss
Lavinia Rawlins.*

September 26th, 1740.

Dear Miss Lavy,

I'LL swear, I cannot but from
my Heart envy your Happi-
ness; you, who sit snug under the
Roof of an indulgent Parent, whilst
I am daily tramping it to St. *Paul's*,
and back again, to hearken after
my Place; which Walk I have
now taken for fifteen Days past,
till the old Woman is become so
snappish, she will hardly give me
an Answer; and by her Behavi-
our, I am in doubt, whether she
will ever get me a Place or not.
Now, methinks, if I take the
Trouble of walking so far thus
often, as she keeps my Money,

D 2

she

she ought to do no less than to inform me civilly, how she goes on about it.

Sally is provided for already, at six Pounds a-year; which let me tell you, is a pure Beginning. She is to send me the Name of the Street when she is at Leisure; but it is somewhere about *Grovner's-Square*, I think they call it. She is hired for House-maid, and I hope will do very well in it: For you know, she was ever active, and loved bustling.

If the old Woman don't provide soon for me, I'll dance Attendance no longer after her; but as soon as I hear from Cousin *Sally*, I will see her, and fix myself somewhere near her: For they say there are none but People of Fashion live thereabouts; so that one can't be long upon one's own Hands, amongst them.

You

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 53

You shall hear from me again
so soon as I am settled, which I
hope soon to be, as well as Cousin
Sally. I am,

Dearest Lavy,

Your truly loving Friend,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

P. S. Pray remember me to your
good Father, and old *Pfalter*
the Clerk, and his Daughter.

L E T T E R. III.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Miss La-
vinia Rawlins.

September 30th, 1740.

Dear Miss,

FORTUNE having favoured
me with an excellent Place,
I am now as charmingly situated

D 3

as

as I could have wished, or desired ; and am sorry I cannot say as much for poor Cousin *Gatty*, who was still at her own Keeping, when I saw her last: For meeting with nothing in the City, she took a little Lodging within a Street or two of me, in Hopes to mend her Market. She used to call in upon me every Day, when she first came, but I have not now seen her these five Days: So that she may be in Place probably, tho' I know it not yet.

My Master is a Baronet, and my Mistress a Lady, and there is nothing in the World but Coaches, and fine Folks, rattling at the Door, till Midnight; but my Business is all over by Dinner-time, which with us, is four in the Afternoon: For we lie a-bed most Part of the Morning, all but some of us Servants; and indeed,

deed, my Morning Exercise is as sharp as any one's.

Oh ! my Dear, it seemed to me, just at first coming, so queer, you can't imagine. It was just as if I was arrived in some enchanted Island ; there is nothing all Day but Titles in our Mouths. There is my Lord —, sends his Compliments to Sir *Thomas* ; and my Lady, her Duty to her Grace ; and such a Power of gingling Grandeur, that it was some Days before I could frame my Mouth to such high-flown Words ; but now they are so familiar to me, that inquiring after somewhat of our Cook the other Day, I called her her Ladyship ; and many a Time has Sir *Thomas* been at my Tongue's End, when sent of a Message to our *Tom*, my Lady's Footman ; but it will wear off by Degrees, and I shall learn

to distinguish better, when I am under less awe than at present.

I send this only to inquire after yours, and the Doctor's Health, having nothing of News to acquaint you of; but my Master being a Member of Parliament, I have inclosed it under his Frank, with another for your Answer to me: So that as our Correspondence may be carried on at this easy Rate, you will hear from me the oftner; for my young Master is so good natured a Gentleman, that he gets any of us what Franks we will, from his Father. I am,

Dear Lavy,

Your loving Friend,

SARAH MORRIS.

Direct for me, at Sir Thomas ———,
in ——— Street, near Grosvenor-
Square, Middlesex.

L E T-

LETTER IV.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to *Miss*
Sarah Morris.

October 5th, 1740:

Dear Sally,

IT has seemed an Age to me since your Departure for *London*. Your Letter of *September* 2d delighted me very much, and your Description of your Company made my Father laugh heartily. It was with great Pleasure, I heard you both arrived safe in Town; but still, my Dear, Servitude is, and will be Servitude. I expect to follow you, when ever my poor Father's Glass shall be run, though once I had little Thoughts of it; but that Time being past, I look upon myself now, as in a State of Maiden Widow-hood. My In-

D 5

tegrity,

tegrity, (which the World will call my Folly) to my Patron hath lost me one Husband, with whom I might have enjoyed all that is agreeable in Life ; and Fortune once baffled, seldom makes a second Effort in our Favour ; so that my whole Aim in Life, from henceforth, must be to reduce my Mind to my Condition, and whatever proves my Lot, to sustain it with Equanimity. Poor *Gatty*, by a Letter I received from her, seemed greatly to lament her Want of a Place ; but I hope she is, by this Time, suited to her Inclination, as by your own Account, you seem to be, or it will be but melancholy Living by herself ; besides the Consumption it will occasion of her slender Stock, which rather craves an Augmentation. I shall long to hear from her again, and if you can but supply her with Franks, it will be
more

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 59

more pleasurable to me; for otherwise my good Father and I must abate a Dinner, for every Letter we receive from you, not that I mention this to prevent you, or *Gatty's* writing, if no method could be contrived for their free Passage: For assure yourself, dearest *Sally*, I could with Delight fast once a-week, for the Satisfaction of a Line from either of you, to

Your sincere Friend,

LAVINIA RAWLINS.

Let *Gatty* know, I desire a Direction to her:

LET-

L E T T E R. V.

*Miss Gertrude Coningsby, to Miss
Lavinia Rawlins.*

October 7th, 1740.

SURELY! my dear *Lavy*, this Fortune, is the most unsettled Being in the Universe; ever varying so, that one knows not what to make of her. All of us, Child, have our Ups and Downs in the World, so suddenly, and often so whimsically, that it is surprising.

I have taken a Lodging near *Sally*, in one of the genteelest Parts of the Town; but have actually been so engaged since I came into it, that I have not been able to call upon her, for long Time past.

As

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 61

As for a Service, I am almost out of conceit with the Notion of it; and shall scarce trouble myself any further that Way. Fortune, as I said before, is precarious, and, it is possible, may otherwise provide for me.

I have but just Time, dear *Lavy*, to instruct you how to address me: For assure yourself, I shall ever highly esteem what arrives from my dearest *Lavy*, to her

Most obedient Servant,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

At Mr. E—m—ts, in ——— Street,
near Grosvenor-Square, Middlesex.

L E T T E R VI.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, *to Miss*
Sarah Morris.

October 11th, 1740.

Dear Sally,

FOR Heavens sake! let me know by the Return of the Post, how poor *Gatty* is; and if you have not seen her since I heard from you, lose no Time in finding her out: For I verily think, her Disappointment of a Service, has turned the dear Girl's Brain: I received such a Letter from her by the last Post, as you can't imagine. She talks of the Unsteadiness of Fortune, and of Ups and Downs, which she says, are so whimsical, as to be surprising.

She says, she lives in a genteel Part of the Town, and talks of so much Business upon her Hands,
that

that she has never looked out for a Service, nor does she trouble her Head about it: Nay, she was in such Haste at writing her Letter, that she says but little more than barely giving me a Direction how to address to her.

These Things, I say, my Dear, give me a Jealousy, that the poor Creature wants rather good wholesome Care to be taken of her, than a Place, at present.

Let me intreat you, though I hope it was only some little Fit of Despair that had seized her, to find her out, and if she is not fit for Service, to send her down to me, some how or other, where she may at least be out of Harm's Way, till she is better qualified for it.

It will be to no Purpose for me to answer hers, as it may only occasion another from her, equally inconsistent, and tending to my
Dis-

Disturbance, with her last, and give me no Pleasure. Pray fend me immediate Word how you find her.

I hear there has been the Duce to pay at Mr. *Robinson's*, who, before this Time, I find, has repented his second Marriage. The Widow perhaps may avenge my Cause. I cannot say I wish it, but should it so happen, it may the more frequently remind him of my Godmother, and

Your loving Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.

P. S. My Father is in Pain for *Gatty*, till we hear further from you.

LET-

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 65

L E T T E R VII.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

October 18th, 1740.

My dear Lavy,

YOUR last, gave me so much Surprise and Uneasiness, that I could noways rest till I had found out *Gatty*; but believe me, Child! she is far from the disordered Creature you represented her. Her Affairs have, indeed, taken a most unaccountable Turn, and I hope, the dear Girl will be happy, she bidding, in my Mind, extremely fair for it.

You must know *Lavy*, that disappointed of a Place in the City, she took Lodgings at a Plumber's near me, in order to seek that Establishment, she had
fo

so luckily missed at the other End of the Town; but had not lain there above six Nights, when as she was returning home about nine o'Clock, a Gentleman met her, and staring her full in the Face, by Lamplight, declared she was the finest young Creature his Eyes had ever beheld; and at the same Time, intreated it as a Favour, that she would let him know where she lived, that he might be so happy as to compleat the Joy he had so imperfectly received by that false Light, upon a clearer Vision of her by Day-light; protesting, that he had never before been smitten with Charms comparable to hers.

In short, my Dear, being just then before her own Door, she knocked; but he would not part with her, till she had given him leave to drink Tea with her the next Afternoon.

She

She was not long consenting to the Motion ; when wishing her a good Night, he left her ; but under such Confusion, she says, how she should be prepared for his Reception, that she scarce knew what she did, till the Hour of his Return the next Day. However, she dressed herself in every Thing of the best she had, and you know *Gatty* has some very pretty Things by her. She borrowed her Landlady's Tea-Equipage, and having set both her Room and herself in order, she impatiently waited the Arrival of her Lover ; but the Sight of such a fine Gentleman as he then appeared to be, in open Day, so confounded her, that she could scarce support herself, she says ; for it being a misley Evening when she first saw him, he had only a plain blue Coat on, with Brass Buttons ; but now, appearing in
Scarlet

Scarlet trimmed with Gold, a Bag-Wig, and gold laced Hat, so charmingly glaring and gay, she could scarce credit her Eyes, that it could be the same Person. They sat down, and to Tea they went, he casting out frequent rapturous Expressions of her Graces, and of the Affection wherewith he beheld them; then finding she was a single Woman, he pressed for daily Admission, to make his Addresses to her.

You may be sure, my Dear, this was but faintly, if at all refused; and no sooner was Tea over, than he begged her Company to the Play with him. She was never more driven to a Non-plus in all her Life, she says, than on this Demand; neither knowing where it was, or what it was, or how she was to behave there. She was ashamed to declare her Ignorance, but charged her Disappro-

approbation of it, to her being but just arrived from the Country, and the Want of proper Habili-ments to appear in.

This Put off, could by no Means be complied with; the Clothes she then had on, he said, were most agreeable to the Pit, and such only, as the very best of Lady's appeared in, when they mobbed it. This last Word, struck her all of a Heap, and she then, more vehemently than ever, desired to be excused: For that a Mob, was so terrifying a Thing to her, as to be absolutely her Aversion.

She says, that thereby discovering her Ignorance, he caught her in his Arms, and almost pressing her to Death; my dear little Innocent! said he, I can perceive you have not long been acquainted with this Town. Why? Child! what we Persons of Fashion

shion of both Sexes call Mobbing, is only going into public Places in a Dishabille, or Incog, not to be known, or at least, taken Notice of.

This Salvo, she says, reinstating her Tranquillity, she consented; and sending for a Coach, away they went to the Play-house; but surely, to hear her Description of it, my dear *Lavy*, would think herself in a little Heaven; for she says, that every Thing was so fine, and the Lights so numerous and dazling, it is impossible to describe it; and then there was such ravishing Music, and such Dancing, as she could have attended to for the whole Night; so that she was never more heartily sorry than when it was over.

She has been there several times since, and is ushered into such a Round of Delights, that she is ab-

folutely another Creature. She has laid out almost every Farthing of her Money upon a Gown, a great Hoop-petticoat, and a Power of Finery, hoping it will not be long before they are married, which will amply repay all her Expences.

It happened most luckily, that a little before I took my Leave of her, in came Mr. *Smith*, as she calls him, but, by his Apparel, he must be some Colonel in the Army, at least. He is a very genteel Man, about thirty, and behaves in the most Gentleman-like Manner I ever saw a Man, and seems excessively fond of her ; for he could not forbear trifling with her before me, when suspecting my Stay might be troublesome, I only waited for the above Observations, and wished her Good-night.

My Dear, you never saw such an Improvement in your Life, in any one Person, as this Affair has
made

made in *Gatty*. You would take her, by her Air and Behaviour, to have been born and bred at Court, nor is she in the least to be distinguished from the fine Ladies that visit at our House, but by her Accent, which will discover itself now-and-then, though she endeavours to varnish it over as much as possible.

I am afraid I have tired out your Patience by this long Detail, but not doubting you would receive equal Pleasure from reading, with myself in reporting her good Fortune, I could scarce say less upon the Subject. With my Respects to the good Doctor, I am,

Dear Lavy,

Your sincere Friend,

SARAH MORRIS.

P.S. Pray, in your next, explain the Hint you gave of Mr. Robinson.

L E T-

LETTER VIII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins to Mrs. Sarah Morris.

October 25, 1740.

Dear Sally,

YOUR last relieved me beyond measure, as to the Concern I was under for poor *Gatty*: If her Courtship concludes in a good Husband, nothing but the same good Fortune to yourself, will be equally pleasing to me, and really, from the Appearance of the Thing, according to your Relation, I see not how she can well miscarry. All that I should condemn her for in the Transaction would be, in case she has given herself out for a Fortune, which I hope she has not: For should she break Faith first, she is ever after precluded from all Reproaches for his Disaffection and Maltreatment of her.

VOL. I.

E

This

This is but a Surmise of my own, as a thing possible; but I hope I may be deceived in it. My Father, who penetrates deeper into Affairs than we can, for Want of his Age and Experience, is not without his Fears for her undoing; alledging the infinite Variety of Snares laid, by licentious Youth of your City, for the Seduction of Innocence; and says, young Women can scarce be enough upon their Guard, against the Insinuations of his Sex, who glory in our Destruction. He may, its possible, be too rigid in his Censures; but at least it becomes us to be wary.

I dont find, by your Letter, that she is apprised either of his Rank, Family, or Habitation; which Enquiry, I think, ought to be made, as also into his Character, previous to any farther Engagement with him: for Marriage, once had, can never be vacated; and was I to
make

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 75

make my Election, it should be for Servitude, in Linsey-Woolsey, all the Days of my Life, where I could shift my Station upon Disapproval, rather than I would irreleasably be bound to the Man, who carried not the utmost human Probability of making a good Husband; not but that Fate must be subscribed to; but then, with me, it should be only where I had gained the minutest Intelligence of the Person, by the truest Lights I could discover, that my future Prospect would at least be agreeable.

I know not whether I ought to mention to her, what I hear is going forwards, till I have it from her own Pen; so shall be silent till licensed either by you, or herself, for enlarging upon it.

Let me hear how it proceeds.

I am, dear Sally,

Your most true Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.

P. S. Prevail with *Gatty* to hint it to me, that I may have a fair Opening to correspond with her upon it.



LETTER IX.

Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby to *Miss* Lavinia Rawlins.

October 29, 1740.

I Vow to Gad! my dearest *Lavy*, I am hipt most intollerably, at your Silence to my last; for tho' the Hurry I scratched it out in, might sufficiently testify the Confusion of my Intellects, yet it certainly demanded an Answer. Nay, possibly, it might not reach you; for, kiss me, if I remember the least thing of what became of it, after I had spun it to a Conclusion.

May

May I die, my Dear, if I believe there is such another pretty Fellow in the whole Military, as now pays his Addresses to me. Bless me! that I should not have known *London* before! Why, Child, it is a new World. Never tarry in *Yorkshire*, my Dear, whilst there is such a Place as this to resort to. I was at the old Playhouse last Night, to see *Hamlet*; when that dear little Fellow *Garrick*! O! how delightfully mad was he! And, my Dear, there were several of the Royal Family there, I know them all by Sight; and so elegantly were we Ladies drest, in the Front-Boxes, as would have done your Heart good to have seen us; but possibly I may be talking Gibberish all this while, to you, who are a solid Country Lady, and whose only Scenes are bleak Hills, and dreary Valleys. Alas! my Dear, thou knowest not what Life means!

You speak, eat, sleep, breath, and so can the Parrot, which Mr. *Smith* presented me with t'other Day; but for the true Relish of living in Taste, give me leave to say, my *Lavy* is an utter Stranger to it. Pack up your Alls then, dear Girl, leave Dad to his old Woman again. A thatched Parsonage is no Dwelling for so sweet a Girl as my *Lavy*. Why thou'dst be a Peerefs, my Dear, in one Quarter; for, trust me, *Lavy*, the Gentlemen want fine Girls here, as much as in any one Place you can imagine; there are but few of our native Red and White here. And faith! had I not been engaged to Mr. *Smith* already, I believe, my Beauty would have soon made me a Countess: Nay, could you but observe how the Noblemen eye me in the Boxes, you would soon be of my Opinion.

I presume, the next Account you have of me, will be in my
Chariot,

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 79

Chariot, by the Name of Mrs. *Smith* ; for my Dear keeps his Chariot ; but never comes to my Lodging in it, because the World should not suspect a Courtship, he says, till we shew out together at once. Perhaps, you may grow dull at my Sprightliness, and wish I had done, so permit me, dear *Lavy*, once more to subscribe myself

Thine most affectionately,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

P. S. We go to the Opera Tomorrow for the first Time.

L E T T E R X.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins *to Mrs.*
Gertrude Coningsby.

Nov. 5, 1740.

Dear Gatty,

I Stand condemned for not answering yours of the Seventh of last Month; but, believe me! it consisting of such broken Sentences, and so unlike to the Manner of my dear *Gatty*, that I laboured under no small Apprehension of your being delirious; or can what I received from you a few Days ago, add much to my Hopes of your Recovery. Is this the Language of my dear *Gatty Coningsby*? And is it because you are to be the Wife of a Soldier, that you assume the Intrepidity to defy your Maker?

I hope

I hope you will pardon the Liberty I take with you ; but as you have often heard my Dad, as you call him, from the Pulpit, decry Vice in any Shape it might assume ; so suffer me his Daughter, to renew a Sense of his Precepts in your Mind, which I can promise you, if closely applied, will prove no ways disserviceable to you.

I must profess myself a Stranger to your Plays, and Operas ; but should imagine, some one or other of the Number of Females who have left *Yorkshire* in our Memories, had Promotion been so rife with you, would before now, have been elevated to the Dignities you mention, which I never yet heard they were.

My Father heartily wishes you all Joy, attendant on your Nuptials ; but would have you act prudently ; hoping also you have behaved candidly with Mr. *Smith*,

that he may find you the same after Marriage, as he conceives of you beforehand.

I long to hear of what Family Mr. *Smith* is, and what Command he has in the Army, his Age, Stature, and many other Particulars, of which fail not of an Account; but on no Score, let the Knot be tied without Notice, to

Dear Gatty,

Your faithful Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.



L E T T E R X I.

*Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby to Miss
Lavinia Rawlins.*

Nov. 9, 1740.

IT is a Want of proper Introduction into the Methods of high

high Life, that sets my *Lavy* upon exclaiming against those few Words of Gaiety I employed in my last to you; why Child! when one is at *Rome*, one must act like a *Roman*. Lard! my Dear, there is no carrying on a polite Conversation without it, rot me if there is, as my dear Mr. *Smith* says.

He paid a Visit to an old Aunt of his, and her three Daughters, the other Day; for the old Lady, tho' she seldom stirs abroad, he said, had a violent Mind to see me. They are excellent bred Ladies, I can assure you, and talk as freely of all the Quality, as you and I can of our Country Neighbours. It was from them, my Dear, that I brought off some of the smartest little Gingles you ever heard, and if a Body did not vent them again upon proper Occasions, I vow to Gad, one might as well mope at home over the *Pilgrims*
Pro-

Progress; for it is the Frequency of the Repetition, that ingrafts them into one's own Dialect, and then they flow so easily, that one is never at a Loss for them. Believe me, *Lavy*, it is ravishing to converse with such Company, as ever adds somewhat striking to one's Manners and Politeness.

Upon my Soul! *Lavy*, I laughed heartily, tho' all alone, at what thou thought'st, I'll be sworn for thee, the very tip-top Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge; and possibly, what might have sounded tunably from the Mouth of one's Grandmother, rivelled into the Folds of an Excess of Caution; for surely Child, you meant not that I should catechize the Captain in your antique Stile; as, who are you? of what Family? where do you live? shew me your Commission? to which, I am surpris'd you did not add, shoulder your Musket too,
that

that I might have seen how perfect he was in his Exercise. Ha, ha, ha, by Jove! I am rapt with the Conceit; but my Dear, the very Air, the Climate, the Manners, and Methods of this Place of Pleasure, suffer us not to proceed by your *Yorkshire* Maxims, where you may remember, my dame *Goslin*, would not suffer young *Pepper* the Grocer to confer about Marriage with her Daughter *Molly*, till she was satisfied to a Dram, what Sugar and Plumbs his Stock consisted of.

Fie upon you! my dear *Lavy*, contract not thy Soul into such scanty Limits; your Queries may amuse you in Speculation; but split me! Child! if I should not be taken for an impertinent Trifler, to offer them here, to a Gentleman of Figure; besides, my Dear, what matters it to me as yet, what Rank the Captain bears, so that
he

he is but able to maintain me like a Lady? for he must rise, as he justly observes, on Course, having such Friends as he has at Court, and in the Army. His Royal Highness and he, are Hand and Glove, and to hear him relate the Conferences frequent between them, would do one's Heart good, it is so engaging: So that I tell thee, Child, be he what he will at present, he must be a great Man.

Prithee, *Lavy*, come to *London*; one Fortnight spent in this Town, with the least Application to Business, would so scour off the Rust of a *Yorkshire* Education, that thou wouldst turn out as bright as the best of us.

I long to be married, for Cousin *Sally's* Sake, intending so soon as that is over, to take her home to me; where clothing her as my Kinswoman, and shewing her a little of the Beau Monde, I shall

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 87

shall not doubt, in a short time, of settling her as genteely as myself, in a Family of her own : for I begin to be very sensible, that a Girl without a Head, may work her Fingers to the Bone, before she makes a Penny Advantage of her Labours.

I must once more therefore advise my dear *Lavy*, to post away to *London* ; where, as it will soon be in my Power to advance her Fortune, she shall ever find it the Inclination of her

Most obedient Friend,

and Servant,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

LET-

LETTER XII.

Mrs. Sarah Morris to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

Nov. 13, 1740.

Dear Lavy,

WHILST thee and I are scrubbing and bustling for our daily Bread, here is *Gatty*, trolling about at her Ease like a Dutcheß. Would you believe it? My Dear, I saw her Yesterday following the Captain, himself in one Chair, and she in another, as they passed by our Door, either going to the Park, or some other Morning Amusement ; and positively, my Dear, she looked so charmingly, that not a Soul who had seen her Face over the Wings of her Hoop (as I did, from the Top of our Steps) could have argued, from her Appearance, that

that she was but a raw *Yorkshire* Girl the other Day. She sat as erect, and her Head moved as regularly from right to left, to see who admired her, as if she had been bred to it from her Cradle.

I wish we were both as well provided for.—The Captain is a lovely Man to be sure, and vastly fond of her, that's very plain; for one how or other he is at an immense Expence about her. I must say, it grudges me to be rubbing and dusting all Day, whilst she is parading it like a Princess; but I hope my Turn will come, or I shall think it very hard: For I believe you must do me the Justice to say, *Lavy*, that I am noways her inferior, either in Face, or the Gracefulness of my Person.

I declare, I am quite ashamed to call to see her, as she never
does

does me that Favour now; nor had I the Assurance when I was there the other Day, to call her Cousin, even when I was by myself with her:

It is impossible you should conceive, *Lavy*, what an entire new Creature she is, in Speech, Gait, Air, and Behaviour; nay, her very Eyes roll with such a Languishment, as she winds about the Balls to their Corners, that one would imagine her near fainting now-and-then; just as my young Lady does in her Sweet-heart's Company: And then, she will draw out her Words, on particular Occasions, that you would suppose she was falling to sleep, and on a sudden rise again, as we used to sing Psalms in the Country, only not quite so loud.

For Goodness sake! what will become of me, if I don't get out of this Service. Why, I have an
Age

Age of Practice to run through, before I shall be qualified to converse with Mankind, and am amazed how it was possible for *Gatty* to be so perfect already, as she is ; but some People shall have Luck, do what they will, and hers is all owing to her being out of Place, and being able to shew herself in the World : For what is ever to be expected, where one is perpetually mewed up within Doors.

I am glad, *Lavy*, you can content yourself with your rural Habitation ; but let me tell you, was you in my Place, and knew better, you would be a little staggered as well as myself, at seeing all the Good pass your own Door, to that of your Neighbour's. I shall soon let you know how she proceeds ; but believe the next News you hear from me will be, that I have quitted Sir *Thomas*'s, for I can but go to Service
again

again when all is gone, and I am resolved to cast myself in Fortune's Way, now I am better acquainted with the Town, by shewing myself in public.

My Head turns round with thinking; so dear *Lavy*,

Your sincere Friend,

SARAH MORRIS.



LETTER XIII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins to Mrs. Sarah Morris.

Dec. 14, 1740.

Dear Sally,

HAVING but little News stirring in these our remote Parts of the Kingdom, I have waited with Impatience, for some Posts,
in

swinging Jointure, and so it seems her first Husband's Settlement testified ; but about six Weeks ago, came a Gentleman from abroad, to whom four hundred and thirty-five Pounds a Year is payable out of it, by Way of Annuity ; this he now demanding, with an Arrear out of it ever since her first Husband's Death, it is said, not only the Estate, but the Money she was reputed to have been worth, will be so diminished, that, for ought I know, you might, in the long-run, have proved the richer Wife to him : For I am told, she keeps so much Company, is so much abroad, and so expensive at home, that he is now ready to hang himself, nor durst he to aim at curbing Madam's Inclination, her Family-spirit being such, that having checked her the other Day, for staying out a Fortnight, upon a Visit proposed for the Afternoon only ; in her Impatience for the
the

the Rebuke, she threw his new Tye-wig in the Fire, and whilst her Blood was up, would have sent him after it, had she been able to have prosecuted her Will to Action. Nay, my Friend told me, that many a Set of China-ware, Sconces, and the like brittle Furniture, have, in her Passions, suffered under the same Hand ; so that I fear, the poor Man has enlisted himself into the Troop of Miserables, and of those in the superlative Degree too, being become the Byword of the whole Country.

My poor Father has had such a Cough this Winter, as has worn him away surprisngly, and I fear has touched his Lungs ; may Heaven guard his dear Life ! for during the Continuance of that, though meanly, I shall think I live happily ; but I must submit.

I shall ever be joyous at your own and *Gatty's* Prosperity ; and as you
can

can supply me with Accounts
of both, at so cheap a Rate, let
me not want that Solace, ever so
agreeable to,

Your loving Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.



LETTER XIV.

*Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs.
Gertrude Coningsby.*

Dec. 20, 1740.

Dear Gatty,

I WAS in great Expectation I
should, before this time, have
received a Line from Mrs. *Smith*,
though it had been to such a dark
Corner of the World as this I
live in.

Is it that your whole time is ex-
hausted in Courtship? or in receiv-
ing

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 97

ing and paying Visits, on occasion of the Celebration of your Nuptials? Or what other Engagements lie so weighty upon your Hands, that no single Moment can be spared to the Gratification of a former Friend? For that your Advancement in Life has already raised you above all future Concern for me, I would not willingly imagine. Then satisfy me, dearest *Gatty*, under your own Hand, that it is not so, for the present Ease of my Mind, and give me the Hopes of my dear Girl's approaching Felicity, equal to the Desires of

Your sincereſt Wellwiſher,

LAVINIA RAWLINS.

VOL. I.

F

LET-

L E T T E R XV.

*Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Miss
Lavinia Rawlins.*

Dec. 28, 1740.

TO thy last, my dearest *Lavy*,
so short and pithy, I can
only return, that I am not yet
Mrs. Smith, save in Affection,
on both Sides : For I think I may
say, without vanity, that the dear
Man covets nothing, in this World
more, than a speedy Union be-
tween us, but you know it is not
my Place, to urge matters beyond
what a tacit Compliance will jus-
tify : For let me tell you, *Lavy*,
I have not abated an Inch of my
Punctillio's, or even ever permit-
ted too rude a Salute from him :
Nay, have steered clear of the
Admission of the least Familiarity,
inconsistent with the strictest Re-
gard

gard to my Honour ; though you may imagine, fond Lovers will, if a streight Hand is not held over them, be often for pushing their Dalliances too far, for the Permission of Modesty.

My Dear, he is one of the charmingest Men you ever was in Company with in your Life, (pardon me, my Dear, if I except not Mr. *Willoughby* himself) 'fore Gad ! I think him so ; and is so amorous, that Deuce take me ! if I am not driven to my Trumps, how to manage him sometimes ; though all, in a most Loving and modest Way, too : Now, what do you think ? We were at his Aunt's t'other Day, romping with two of his Cousins ; and as we were swinging him round upon the Bed, one of his Hands, some how or other in the Scuffle, got so far out of its due Latitude, that giving a Shriek, I jumped from the Bed,

and was more than half angry ; crying out, you confounded Devil, what are you at ? When had you but been Witness to the Confusion he was in, and the Multitude of Apologies he made for the Accident, you would have been delighted with him ; nor durst he for the whole Day afterwards, look me in the Face again, he blushed so : For I'll be sworn, if there ever was a modest Man upon the Earth, it is himself.

Split me ! Child ! (I beg your pardon) we live most deliciously ; for his Aunt and Cousins, with whom I am now perfectly acquainted, are the freest, and most facetious Set of Mortals breathing.

Now, to shew you a Specimen of my dear Mr. *Smith's* Value for our Sex. As his Cousins and I were discoursing of Reputations, one of them started the mention of a young Lady, who had granted

some such peculiar Favours to her Lover, before Marriage, as it is usually thought, should have been reserved till afterwards. One of them demanded, whether the young Gentleman still held in his prior Resolution for Matrimony? Her Sister replying that he did; then answered Miss, if she was persuaded of the Integrity of her Man, I own I can see no harm in it, as Matrimony was soon to succeed. How Miss! said I, is that your Way of thinking: Let me tell you, it is very far from mine, or that of any virtuous Woman in Christendom, as I would hope you are; for I can assure you, barely proposing the Question to me, would irritate me, to the utter Detestation of such a Wretch; nor should the Man who had once published his Inclination to me in such Terms, ever be admitted to a nearer Alliance with

me, I should hate him so, for the mean Opinion he must have had of me, before he could have started the Proposal.

Well said! my little Angel, cried Mr. *Smith*, who had sat wholly neuter during the Debate; this Speech, and delivered from the Heart too, as I am satisfied it is, by the rising Fury in your Countenance, has fixed me yours for ever. Fie! fie! Cousin, added he, how could you maintain so erroneous a Position? Surely! you speak not your true Sentiments. Observe you not the Majesty which appears in my *Gertrude's* heroic Conclusions of Virtue, and Honor, to what yours convey? Modesty is the Pride of your Sex, and Chastity its most sparkling Jewel, which once sullied, a Mistress she may make, but never more a Wife, for a prudent Man.

Now

Now tell me, *Lavy*, is not this a Demonstration of an exquisite Taste for our Sex? Nay, I would not have been without this Testimony of his generous Nature, for the full half of all his Fortune. A Woman may ever think herself secure in such Hands, as are as careful of her Reputation as herself.

We are to go to the first Masquerade, my Dear, which is almost the only Winter Diversion I have not seen; though how I shall behave there, I cannot say; but presume there is a Rote for that, as for other Things, and I have experienced, that a Trifle of Observation, carries one through every Novelty with credit.

I wanted to have represented a Sheperdess; but Mr. *Smith*, a dear Man, says, I shall resemble what both my Nature, and Presence, better qualifies me for, a Queen; and for himself, he is

to personate the Monarch, so that we may, possibly, cut the greatest Figure of any body there.

I shall be able to give you some Taste of that princely Diversion in my next, and very soon after that, we are to be married. Having given you all the News in my Budget, I shall, though for the last Time, I hope, subscribe myself,

Your most obedient,

GERT. CONINGSBY.



LETTER XVI.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

Jan: 1, 1740.

Dear Lavy,

I HAD Thoughts of pursuing your Advice, and of enjoining myself a Perseverance in my Business,

ness, as the best Means for detaching all roving Fancies from my Head; but had scarce rubbed on three Days under my Resolution, before I found my young Master so good-humoured and smirking upon me, that, I vow, I was almost ashamed of it.

He met me the other Day upon our Stairs, which are very dark; when either knowing, or believing it was me, he caught me in his Arms to kiss me. I took it for our Ninny *Isaac*, who is for ever playing Tricks with the Maids, and giving him a good Slap in the Face, was going to cry out; but he stopt me with, hush my dear *Sally!* it is only me.

I presently recollecting his Voice, beg'd his Pardon, and made twenty Excuses for the Affront I had offered him; when clasping me to his Breast, my Love, said he, thy hand dressed in its utmost Severity, is

more grateful to me than that of any other of thy Sex in the Universe, loaded with the most costly Donations. I have long waited for a Conference with my *Sally*; but as we are every Moment liable to a Surprise here, appoint me some Time and Place where I may, for one half Hour, disburden my Soul to thee uninterrupted, kissing me still at the Conclusion of every Period.

Believe me! *Lavy*! my Situation was not so uneasy to me as some Folks might have pretended; but my Cheeks glowed so with his Kisses, that you might have lighted a Candle by them, and happy for me it was, that in the Dark they were not perceptible: However, I was silent as to the Place, and only made as if I would fain have persuaded him to let me go; but that he was resolved to postpone, he said, till he had engaged me to promise
to

to be sweeping out his Chamber at ten o'Clock the next Morning.

You may as readily imagine, as I can declare to you, that I had but little Sleep that Night ; for Mr. *Thomas* is such a personable Youth, and of such superior Qualities, that few Girls but might be proud of being noticed by him.

Well ! I tumbled and tossed about all Night, I say, and had, by Morning, formed so many different Methods of Behaviour to him, according to his Demeanor to me, that one jostling out the other from my Head, by the time he met me, I was never more at a Nonplus in my Days, than for the least thing to say to him, in the manner I had before proposed.

I repaired to my Post at the Hour prefixed, nor was he more than a few Minutes after me ; but sure, such a Compound of Love as he appeared to be, is scarce conceivable.

ceivable. He gave me ten Kisses for one Word, and hugged me in such Raptures as were astonishing. He swore he died daily for me, and unless I would be so compassionate as to return his Love, it would break his Heart, protesting, that he had never enjoyed himself as usual, from the first Moment he had beheld me in the Family.

I expressed my Sorrow for having given him the least Disturbance : I assured him it was involuntary, and rather than contribute to his further Uneasiness, I would quit my Service with all my Heart. What ! said he, would you sheath a Dagger in my Heart ? No, *Sally*, added he, you have effectually done that already, which wants but extracting with a rude Hand, to let my Heart's Blood flow out with it. O ! *Sally*, let my Wound remain, it is what I glory in, whilst the Instrument that gave it, proves the
most

most balsamic Restorative to me. Should you desert me, *Sally*, continued he, I should be truly miserable ; but think not, my Charmer, to avoid me by a Removal hence, for very Instinct would send me after thee, even to the remotest Regions. O ! never must thee and I be parted more.

I told him, that his Station in Life, I was satisfied, would place him above a Condescension to a poor Servant, as I was. That I had received a virtuous Education, though now reduced to Servitude under his Mamma ; and that I would never submit to the Desires of any Man but an Husband. The very thing, my Dear, replied he, that I crave to be. O ! grant me but that Blessing, dearest *Sally*, and you compleat my Happiness.

Bless me ! Sir, said I, what would Sir *Thomas* ? what my good Lady ?
 nay,

may, what would all the World say of you, should you, who are the Heir to such Possessions, demean yourself, by Marriage with your Mamma's Maid? (for I was willing, my Dear, to start all the Objections I could, for the sake of his removing them) and how may you hereafter despise me, for the Lowness of my Birth, and Indigence of my Circumstances, in respect to your own high Birth and Fortune, who might have claimed so ample a Dowry, with any Lady you might have chosen?

In short, *Lavy*, I had the Pleasure to hear every of my Arguments turned upside down, and nothing but my Engagement not to decline his Addresses, till a proper Opportunity for making me his Wife, and then my Promise to become so, would be accepted by him; nor was I so stony-hearted as absolutely to reject his Suit, but de-

LAVINIA RAWLINS. III

desired only some few Days Consideration, before I returned him my final Answer; this I did because, you know, my Dear, it would have the better Look with it, and would not shew me so forward; for Men are ever the more solicitous, for the little Checks we give to their Passions. And upon this we parted.

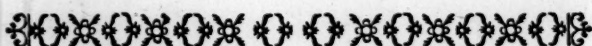
Now, I must intreat my dear *Lavy* to give me her impartial Opinion for the better Regulation of my Conduct, as I expect to be pressed to my Consent every Day, his Eyes urging me hourly to a Compliance, and there can be no Use in giving him unnecessary Pain.

Let Mrs. *Smith*, that is to be, hold up her Head as she pleases, upon her extraordinary Merits, which have obtained her such a Lover as the Captain. If Worth is to be estimated by the Rank and Possessions of one's Suitor, surely! a Baronet (for so Mr. *Thomas* must be

be at his Papa's Death) will place me in a superior Light to her; but I shall only add, my Request for your Answer, and Assurances, that Maid, Wife, or Widow, I shall ever be my dearest *Lavy's*

Most affectionate Friend,

SARAH MORRIS.



LETTER XVII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Sarah Morris.

Jan. 5, 1740.

Dearest Sally,

THE Matter of your last is of such a Nature, as will not permit me to delay an Answer to it, notwithstanding the Illness of my dear Father, who declines so daily, that I begin to have but little further Hopes of his long being a
Man

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 113

Man for this World. I have also one by me, of an earlier Date, from *Gatty*, as yet unanswered.

Surely! you must be the two luckiest Girls that ever fled the North, to have both such happy Prospects of Advancement in your Circumstances, and that in so short a Space too; nor can I ascribe it to any other Source, than to the virtuous Educations you have both received, under the pious Tuition of Mrs. *Morris*, and to the unblameableness of your past Conducts; which Demeanor, in either Sex, if persevered in, seldom fails of its just Reward; but as I cannot spare time for Prolixity, though I could pleasurably enlarge upon the Subject, I shall come at once to my Declaration of that Opinion you so ardently desire.

There can be no Dispute, my dearest *Sally*, but the Proposal your
young

young Master has tendered you, is too advantageous, if it be honourable, for any Girl in your Circumstances to reject; but my Dear, though I admit it necessary always to have an Eye to one's own Advancement; yet, as Advancement includes not only Riches and Titles in Life, but all manner of eligible Felicity; those alone, are not always capable of administering it, there being such a Number of Causes, in spite of mere Riches or Honours, to make us miserable.

Mr. *Thomas*, you say, loves you: We will therefore take that for granted. He would marry you; it is possible. He must have a Title, and perhaps a great Estate; admit this also. But has not Mr. *Thomas* a Father, a Mother, who are capable of resenting his Behaviour so violently, as from the Perplexities they may induce upon him, may introduce Repentance in his Mind,
and

and sting him to the Quick for his Disobedience ?

This may be succeeded by Contempt to yourself, the Occasion of it (nor is it so uncommon a Case as not to be suspected) even to that Degree, that he may turn you adrift to your own Guidance, and the Sneers of a malicious World around you. Consider then, which Condition will be preferable ; Service united to high Life, or to that humble Station you are now in ?

You will say, every Man is bound to maintain his Wife, and true enough ; but whether is it better, by your own Hands, to provide that Substinance your Station in Life requires, or to be dependent upon some scanty Pittance, noways adequate to the Rank you bear, without Prospect of Amendment, or even Alteration of your Affairs, by the Chance of another Match ?

I could add much more, but have not time farther to expatiate, than by my Intreaties, that you would not prove over hasty in your Resolves, but duly weigh both Sides of the Question, before you fall, from whence you can never more expect to rise, should you prove unsuccessful. I am,

Dear Sally,

Your true Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.



LETTER XVIII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins to *Mrs.*
Gertrude Coningsby.

Jan. 10, 1740.

Dear Gatty.

THY Humour, Child, is so vivacious, that it delights me exceedingly; whilst I labour Night and Day, under the unprofitable Employment of a Nurse to my
dear

dear Father, whose Continuance in Life can never reward my Care of him ; for he is now so far gone, that it would argue meer Folly, in me, ever to hope for his Recovery. However, his last Moments shall be rendered as comfortable by me, as possible ; tho' sitting up on Nights, as I have constantly done these three Weeks past, and obtaining scarce a Moment's Rest by Day, has worn me down beyond Imagination.

His whole Breath, poor Man, issues in blessing me, and storing my Mind with such excellent Precepts, as he hopes, he says, will furnish me with Virtue for my future Life.

He advises me, as soon as possible, after he shall sleep with his Fathers, by all Means to seek a Service, in some private and conscientious Family, here in the Country, rather than at *London* ;
he

he having but a very mean Opinion of that City, for young deserted Women to expose themselves in.

I am almost distracted to think what Course I shall pursue when he drops. I often cast back a Thought to Mr. *Willoughby*; but it is in vain, I never encourage it.

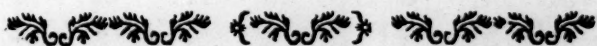
You live happily, *Gatty*, ever in some Amusement, with that generous Man Mr. *Smith*, whom I long to see, and greatly respect, for his Love to you; but must desire in your next, you would send me an exact Description of the Masquerade you speak of, and wherein the Pleasure of being at it consists; I having no manner of Conception how the least Delight can arise, from seeing you know not who, in strange Dresses: For from what I have formerly heard Mr. *Robinson* say of it, they all wear Masks. Write me also how
you

you dress like a Queen, for I never saw one.

I have only to add, my Approval of Part of Mr. *Smith's* Behaviour at his Aunt's, whose Modesty you have displayed in the best of Colours; and if you have room in your next, pr'ythee, *Gatty*, describe your own Blushes, equal, at least, to Mr. *Smith's*, for the Accident you mentioned; or I shall scarce take you for a modest Pair, whenever you come together; but I have done.

Your loving friend

LAV. RAWLINS.



LETTER XIX.

Mrs. Sarah Morris, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

Jan. 14th, 1740.

My dear Lavy,

YOU know I love you, and
above all Things prize your
can-

candid Advice; but dearest Child! why must it ever be spiced with somewhat disrelishing? You approve my young Master's Professions, if they be honourable. Dear Girl, why that *if*, to create Jealousy in one's Mind, that they can possibly be otherwise? Even that one touch of thy Pen, has given me more Disquiet, than all his Love can compensate for; and then, without once bringing to the Account all that Grandeur, Title, or other Blessings, to rebound from the Match; these, you skip over, to arrive at the dark Side of the Page, of a Father, a Mother, Repentance, Disobedience, Contempt, turning a Drift, Service, malicious World, and a Loss of all future Advancement; on which you declaim with so many discouraging Reflections, that I cannot help trembling at the Remembrance of them.

What

What can I attribute this to, but the Vapours? A phlegmatick Disposition? A Defect in the Blood, which having vitiated the vital Ferment, turns every Object into Demons and Hobgoblins? Was I apt to be dispirited, it were enough to distract me, to place Fortune under the fable Mantle you clothe her with; but, *Lavy*, she that would push her Fortune by a bold Stroke, with a View of being made for ever by it, must not at the Entrance, abandon herself to Despair; she must rush on courageously, and force her Way through all Opposition, to her Will's Completion.

As for the weighing with your Scales all Sides of the Question; in my Comprehension, no Question can subsist, whether my Lady's, or her Housemaid's Post in the Family, is the most eligible.

I am heartily sorry you are so near to losing the poor Doctor;

VOL. I.

G

but

but our Circumstances in Life are daily changing, and my poor Mamma's Death made but the same, in *Gatty's* and my Affairs, as his must make in yours. I hope, when that Event happens, I need not urge your speedy Repair hither, where alone, your best Expectations can be sufficiently answered; and so far as my little Influence in Life can extend, you may Command,

Your affectionate Friend,

SARAH MORRIS.

L E T T E R XX.

Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

Jan. 20th, 1740.

TEN thousand Worlds, all at my own bestowing, would I give but to recall the passed Day to my Dispose again! Surely!
the

the damned, roll not in Torments, equal to what mine now are! Is there no private Portal we may let in Death at, but must be opened by our own Hands! Is Misery so sufferable, as not to end one, tho' invited to it! Alas! I fear it is, and for the Residue of a long lingering Life, may I bewail that cursed Masquerade.

No End! What? No Remission of my Woes! O! Loss of Honour, never to be reclaimed! Heavens! Why load ye thus the Female weakly World, with that *Egyptian* Slavery, Chastity? whilst to the other Sex, you ascribe Honour, even in the Loss of Shame, and make him triumph in destroying it, both in himself and us!

Thou fickle, techey Bawble, Reputation! till thou art lost, scarce ever known to have existed; but having once escaped, no more to be recovered! I'm wholly Hor-

rouer to myself! dear *Lavy*: For such an Act, although involuntary, has happened, as neither Oceans of Tears can wash away, or Time itself obliterate.

O *Lavy*! I cannot, must not conceal from you, my most deplorable Catastrophe, but must enjoin you, not a Word to *Sally*. I durst not see her Face, or was you near me, could I for Confusion, publish the Cause of my Distraction to you; but Sorrow is communicable, and certainly abates, by Participation.

That hellish Masquerade! *Lavy*, has undone me. I went to it, as I wrote you I should, with Mr. *Smith*, drest like an *Indian* Queen, he like an *Eastern* Emperor. The Sight was exquisite; Side-boards magnificent; the Musick enchanting; a World of Pleasure, all.

Mr. *Smith* was so excessively cautious of losing me in the
Multitude,

Multitude, that he would trust me no further than in his own Sight, lest I should accidentally fall into Hands disagreeable to me.

The Room was excessive hot, and oft had we sipt of the most delicious Wines there, when the Heat still continuing, almost past Sufferance, Mr. *Smith*, ever ready with his friendly Succour to give me Pleasure, lest I should faint, proposed retiring for half an Hour to a Tavern hard by, to cool, and refresh ourselves.

We did so, and were shewed up two pair of Stairs, on Assurance given us, that the Rooms below were all full. Scarce had we walked about the Room six Minutes, before Mr. *Smith* himself slipt down, to order some trivial Refreshment for us; but before I could well imagine him below Stairs, he appeared in the Room again, swung to the Door,

and seizing me, unprepared, ran to the Bed just by us, on which he cast me, and himself fell with me. All this happening without a Word speaking, I was under such Surprise at the Suddenness of it, that I became like a dead Creature, having scarce Power left, either for crying out, or struggling; but so far as I was able, I attempted both.

O *Lavy! Lavy!* I was undone there; nor needs more Words to express my Calamity. I then fainted away, and what might happen next, I am ignorant; nor had my Spirits ever returned, at least not so soon as they did, but for a violent Commotion, by Words, Actions, and clashing of Swords, which roused me.

The first Objects that I beheld upon my Recovery, were two Mr. *Smith's*, or *Indian Kings*, fencing, and contending to destroy each other;

other: For, my Dear, they were both so near the same Height, Size, and Shape, and dress'd so exactly in the same Habits, that no Eye could distinguish the one from the other, by the least Peculiarity; at length, one of them sprang out of the Room, and ran for his Life down Stairs, with the other in pursuit of him, and close at his Heels.

In this Interval, I recomposed my Habit, and arose from the Bed; but being overcome by the Horrour of the Action, my Legs still trembling, and scarce capable of my Support, I sunk down into an Elbow-Chair, to indulge my almost broken Heart, in Weeping and Lamentations.

I had not been long wrapt up in my Reverie, before one of the two Combatants returning, and pulling off his Mask, I found him to be Mr. *Smith*. Alas! Sir, said

I, whence could arise this cruel Usage you have now been guilty of? Wherein have I deserved this ignominious Treatment from you? and fell a weeping, as if I would have dissolved my whole Composition into Tears.

I am but too sensible of thy Injury, my dearest Life, said he, from that designing Villain, who personating me, has robbed me of the sole Delight of my Life, which I had flattered myself, to have centered in thee for ever. What cursed Stratagem directed that foul Adulterer to thy Arms! My Dear, this Plot against thy Virtue, must have been first hatched in Hell, so closely, so iniquitously laid against thy Virtue, and my Honour: For till the Moment I returned, and found him rising from the Perpetration of his Villainy, I bore thee as my Wife, next to my Heart, and dearer to me far than

than my own Soul. What then must be my Torture, to thee is inconceivable ! nor will it satisfy my despairing Mind, that he has received from my Arm the just, though unproportionable Reward of his Temerity ; for that, or an Addition of the whole Universe of Worlds to him, can never re-instate me in the glorious Hopes I had of thee, my dearest unpol-luted.

This Speech, from a Man ever so dear to me, and ten Times more so, since I had discovered his Innocence, hurried me beyond all Patience ; when snatching up a Knife which lay upon the Table, I raised up my Arm, with determinate Resolution to have plunged it into my Bosom ; but Fate, and the kind Man prevented it, by his catching me by the Hand, and disarming me.

I raved, and was quite frantick with Madnefs, at being fo abused; and that, by a Villain too, on whom, for want of the Knowledge of his Person, it would be impossible for me ever to gratify my Revenge; but when I reflected on the Loss of Mr. *Smith* too, whom I had depended upon for my own, and who from his last Speech, I presumed, meditated relinquishing me, my Agonies grew past all Tolleration.

a That dear Man, red me the most comfortable Lectures; but all in vain, as to the Abatement of my Anguish; till unwilling longer to expose myself at a public Tavern, we returned in two Chairs to my Lodging; where tearing off my wretched Robes of Majesty, I begged him to leave me to the Anguish of my own Reflections: For that I was utterly incapable of Consolation.

Mr.

Mr. *Smith*, to whom my Request had ever been a Law, was now retiring; but fearful still, that my Distress might urge me to the Commission of some rash Act upon myself, could not recede, he said, till he had obtained my solemn Promise, to take my Suffering as patiently as possible, till his Return in the Morning; when he hoped, by sound Reasoning, to assuage the Excess of my Sorrow.

In this afflicting State do I now find myself; and when my Suffering may abate, I cannot form the least Surmise. I sometimes rave, then am calm again; still cursing that destructive Masquerade, the sole Cause of my utter Ruin.

The only Consolation I can now enjoy is, whilst I am communicating this to my dear *Livy*: For sleep being forbidden to my Eyelids, lest worse Ill should befall me, I have employed myself, as my
Starts

132 *The HISTORY of*
Starts of Passion would permit,
in giving thee this long Detail,
of your

Most unfortunate,

but true Friend,

GERT. CONINGSBY.

P. S. Pity me, and be secret ; send
me some Consolation before it
may be too late.



L E T T E R XXI.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

Jan. 23, 1740.

Dearest Gatty,

MY Heart bleeds at the Reflection of your Misfortune. Yet you cannot be absolutely abandoned to your Sorrows, Child, when you reflect

flect that your Disgrace is involuntary : Had your Consent accompanied the Fact, I might have justly condemned what now only excites my Compassion for you ; nor will Mr. *Smith*, when he reflects upon the Imposition and Force used for your Destruction, if himself proves a Man of Conscience and Commiseration, desert you, in your Troubles, to Despair. As for my own Part, I should esteem you nothing less for this Event than before ; an Event beyond the Reach of human Fore-cast to have penetrated. An Event instantaneous, by Compulsion, and even whilst you was under his own Protection too ; but, in my Opinion, you will be able to form a true Judgment of the Man from his Behaviour in this Case : For assure yourself, *Gatty*, if his Affection for you has a solid Basis, your Affliction for your Disgrace will but the more precipitately move him to compas-sionate

sionate and receive you to his Breast; but were his Vows fallacious, he will be pleased at the Occasion which now offers, for shaking you off, and relinquishing his Claim in you; in which latter Case, how much better will it be to attach yourself to an honest, though painful Service, which still you may obtain, than to be the Wife of a Man, who can but unite to you for his own Ends.

Now I have indulged with you a while over your Sorrows, spare a few Tears to mine, for the Loss of my dear Father. You have still Hope left of better Days, I of nought but Servitude, which so soon as his Head is laid, I must vigorously prosecute for my Subsistence, or, neglecting, perish.

I hope better News from your next; but however, despair not, whilst you have a Conscience free from Crime. Let me hear how
Mr.

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 135

Mr. *Smith* behaves ; but remember,
Gatty, that should Service prove
your Fate, you will not have fallen
from a greater imaginary Height
to it, than

Your truly loving Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.

LETTER XXII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to *Miss*
Sarah Morris.

Jan. 24, 1740.

Dear Sally,

ON *Monday* arrived the fatal
Hour I have so long expected ;
when my poor dear Father was
translated to the Mansions of Eter-
nity, at nine o'Clock in the Morn-
ing. He went off in my Arms, as
meek as a Lamb, without so much
as a Sigh or Groan. Whilst he is
above Ground, methinks I am not
destitute ;

destitute ; but a few Days will rob me even of his Remains, and then shall I be consigned immediately to Providence, almost naked, as I first entered the World, and all to begin again with me.

I should have coveted following your Opinion, of pursuing my Direction to *London*, but for my dear Father's Advice to the contrary, of settling in some good Family here, which I must now instantly look out for ; where lowering my past aspiring Hopes to my present Indigence, I may bless Providence for my inferior Subsistence. We have no long Race to run, even the oldest of us, and many intervening Accidents deprive us of Part, even of that Space allotted for the Life of Man ; but I despair not rubbing through my Portion of it with chearfulness, however inferior my Station may be ; nor can I, worthy of nothing intrinsically, condemn

demn that Lot, which shall not rank me in the lowest Class.

I could wish, indeed, that my Prospects had never been better than at present; I might then still wait for an Amendment from any Variation; but the Impossibility of ever extending them again to the State I had placed them at, recurring to the Reflection, gives me many an uneasy Pang, in Opposition to my strongest Efforts for avoiding them.

I sincerely wish you happy in all your Undertakings, more especially in that with your young Master; but mock not at my stated Conclusions, till it becomes impossible for any of them to prove your Case. When you are arrived to the Summit of that Pomp you aspire to, still condescend to remember, and as it may suit you, casually, to assist your late Companion, ever your

Loving Friend,

LAVINIA RAWLINS.

LET-

LETTER XXIII.

*Miss Gertrude Coningsby, to Miss
Lavinia Rawlins.*

Jan. 26, 1740.

I HAVE waited under the most impatient Expectations for your Answer to my last, dear *Lavy*, unwilling to burden you with a larger Share of my Misfortunes than you might well bear at once, till I had received your Opinion upon my late Conflict ; but unable to remain longer in Suspence, I have sent you inclosed what I received from *Mr. Smith*, a few Days after my Abuse happened.

I told you in my last, that I dismissed *Mr. Smith* soon after my Return that fatal Night, upon Assurance of his seeing me in the Morning. He came accordingly, but was ready to sink into the Earth at sight of me ; my Face all bloated,
my

my Eyes red as Blood, my Head-dress confused, and my whole self a meer Lump of Deformity: For I had not been in Bed all Night, but had only cast myself thereon, when unable to struggle under my Passions elsewhere; but soon growing uneasy, I arose, walked, sat, lay, alternately, under an Excess of Misery and Distraction; at length, as I said before, Mr. *Smith* arrived; when a View of so much Horror as I exhibited to him, reduced him almost to my deplorable Condition; whilst, taking me in his Arms, and with my Head reclined on his Bosom, sympathising in my Sorrow, which seemed equally burthensom to himself, we maintained a silent Meeting for near an Hour, when perceiving, by my violent Throbbings, that he could expect no Freedom of Discourse with me for that Time, he quitted the Room, and left me.

Yesterday

140 *The HISTORY of*

Yesterday I received the inclosed, to which I returned the Answer subjoined, and am upon the Tenters for his Reply, but could no longer delay seeking your Advice to, dearest *Lavy*, your assured Friend, but

Most afflicted Servant,
GERT. CONINGSBY.



LETTER XXIV.

Jasper Smith, *Esq;* to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

Jan. 23, 1740.

Dear Madam,

AS nothing can happen adverse to dear Miss *Coningsby*, but must affect me equally with herself, so Madam, your late Mishap not only claims my Participation in your Woe, on your Account, but more sensibly subdues me, for my own Sake.

I need not urge the Felicity I had promised myself from so adorable a Bride as Miss *Coningsby*; how I had mentally enlarged my Happiness with her, till Age had so conjoined our mutual Affections to each other, as pleasurably to have removed us, still united, Arm in Arm, to a better Abode for ever. My very Soul speaking from my Eyes, my every Feature, proclaimed this most apparently to her. Judge then, my dearest *Gatty*, the Anguish of my Heart, at this so cruel Abrupton from all my promised Joys with you.

I have most minutely weighed this Accident, and all its Train of Consequences. My Heart would compassionately incline me still, as blameless, to take you for my Wife, but Judgment and Honour draw another way, in dread of future Evils accruing from the Match. Objections swarm so thick to my
Re-

Reflection, that I persuade myself, your own deliberate Thoughts on the Affair, must necessarily incline your Assent to my Conclusions; and that it would not only be impolitic, but highly imprudent in you to marry the Man who himself hath born Witness to your Dishonour.

No one can promise for Futurity. Jars may arise, though causeless, possibly; but, nevertheless, as absolutely destructive of both our future Peace, as were they founded on the strongest Reasonings. This very Fact, we now so both detest, may then be blown into perpetual Hatred, and prove a Means for endless Animosities. As therefore my Inclination still prevails for making you my own, so far as Prudence and our mutual Happiness will permit, I hereby once more make you the Offer of my Person, my Fortune, my every Benefit in Life with me, nay of my Love, my Hopes,
my

my very Soul, unobligated by that Tie alone, which eventually may undo us both.

In this Case, should any Difficulties arise between us, irreconcilable (which Fate avert) we still may separate; ever remembering an handsom Competency for your Provision, in the mean time, as well if separating as together.

Dear Miss, these being the Result of my clearest Reasonings upon the Subject, I chose to communicate them by Writing, for your serious Perusal and Consideration (for as to all the World but ourselves, you will be as much my Wife as Wedlock can make us) my faltering Tongue not daring at a Word to you, that might, but in Possibility, draw on me your personal Displeasure.

I hope you will be so kind to transmit me an Answer, not formed
on

on Passion, or Prejudice, but upon mature Judgment and Deliberation : For as you may assure yourself, a Compliance will enjoin me a perpetual Obligation to Fidelity and Constancy, so will your absolute Non-compliance compel me to break off a Correspondence, I can no longer maintain with the desired Effect.

Yourself, dear Miss, will calculate the Difference between this Day and last *Thursday*, I doubt not, to the Advantage of

Your most ardent Admirer

JAS. SMITH.

P. S. My Servant will call To-morrow for an Answer.

L E T-

LETTER XXV.

*Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Jasper
Smith, Esq;*

Jan. 24, 1740.

SIR,

UNDER the Pressure of my Injuries, I have the Happiness, with less Shame than Confusion, to acknowledge the Disparity of my own Worth, in the general Estimation of the World, between the fatal Day you mention and the present, though, in my own Eye, intrinsically the same; and so far as every Co-operation of my own was wanting to that detestable Action, I should still hope in yours also.

Undoubtedly, your first Symptoms of Affection for me, though arising, perhaps, only from my outward Form, were cherished into the Desire of a conjugal Union between us, from other Motives, I

VOL. I.

H

mean

mean those of my Integrity, Virtue, and Honour. My Face, my Shape, my Behaviour remaining still the same as ever, are those impaired? nor can they be so, by any thing arising from without my own Heart, my Will, my Inclination: Had you committed Treasure to my Keeping, could I have been charged as the Embezzler, because a Robber, by superior Force, had wrested the Deposit from me, and therefore suspected of Dishonesty? If I would, at all Adventures, have secured your Cash from Violence, would I not, to my best Ability, think you, have preserved what is so immensely more precious to every virtuous Woman, my Chastity, the sole Jewel my Sex can boast of, and that, as I may say, in your very Presence too?

If then, to have been involuntarily despoiled of your Treasure (yourself a Witness to it) would have

LAVINIA RAWLINS, 147

have left me guiltless, how much rather ought this Trespass upon my Modesty and Inclination, to subject me to the Compassion than Reproof of the thinking Part of Mankind? who, sensible of the Compunction I must suffer, would rather indulge over me in my Miseries, than upbraid me for the Occasion of them, so foreign to my own Will and Consent.

Give me leave, Sir, though it should prove a Breach of the Decency I owe my own Sex, for once to confess, that your Behaviour to me, since our first Acquaintance, hath been such as to have engaged my Heart in subjection to you; but let me not suffer in your Esteem for this unconstrained Confession: If I must at length give up my Interest in you, merely because one of your own Species, by a diabolical Force and Instigation, hath prevailed over me; let me receive that

148 *The HISTORY of*
Sentence from your own Lips, that
I may at once perish under the De-
nunciation, otherwise, I shall never
cease from my present Sentiments,
whilst I remain

Your most injured Servant,
GERT. CONINGSBY.

P. S. You have seen his Letter and
my Answer. What will be the
Effect of this I can't say, but it
is now two Days since I sent it,
and have had no Answer yet.



LETTER XXVI.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins to Mrs.
Gertrude Coningsby.

Jan. 29, 1740.

Dear Gatty,

MY Blood rose so at *Smith's* Let-
ter inclosed in yours, that I
could have torn his false Heart from
his

his Body, had he been within the Extent of my Fury. Believe me, *Gatty*, if he ever loved you with a pure Desire, no Misfortune, wholly unascriptable to your own Fault, would ever have abated his Passion, but rather have aggravated his Compassion for the Injured.

Here has, as you justly observed, been a Robbery committed ; is the Person spoiled to be suspected of it, by the Person himself who was a Witness of your Reluctance ? Nay, happened it not at a time too, when, had it been in your Power, all the World must believe you would have prevented it. Surely ! he never loved you from the first ; for would ever any Man propose to debauch the Woman he loved ? He may covet your Person, but for his Love, depend upon it from me, there is nothing in it ; Love arising for the Sake of the Person beloved, no one can imagine he would pro-

secute a criminal Correspondence with you for your own Sake.

Be ruled by me ; do as I must. Go to Service, *Gatty*, and live honestly ; then, and then only, you may expect a Blessing, and to live contentedly.—The Man's a Knave, that's positive, and I hate him.

Where is all that Fire, that Spirit, you wrote me with some time ago ? Your Letter gives him too much Advantage over you ; he sees you love him, and will turn it to a Subserviency to his own Ends. Had I been to have answered his, I would have contemned his Offer, and have commanded him for ever from my Sight as a Scorpion, who only lurked to vitiate my Principles, by his pernicious Doctrines.

Was there ever yet a Match contracted not subject to Jars ? Did not our first Parents jar in Paradise ? I am sure we are told so ; but did they part upon it ? and did our
Mother

Mother take a separate Maintenance presently? Besides, were the Dread of jarring now and then, to stave off all Matrimony, till the Parties could be ascertained it would never happen to them, the whole Species must be extinct in a Century, or we must follow the Beasts in common.

Give him no further Hearing, I say; get into Place, and despise him. There are as many Men as Women in the World, or at least, every one her Mate, at one good time or another, never fear.

Let your next satisfy me of your Freedom from him, and where you are settled; but don't send till you again hear from me: For I shall quit the Parsonage-House this Week, and where I shall rest till in Service, I know not: For my dear Father's Words are so impressed on me, that I cannot harbour a single Thought of transgressing them.

I am under such Confusion and Hurry of Spirits, that I have not time to condole with you upon the Shock your Account of the 20th gave me, but may take occasion of doing it after I am settled; all therefore that I shall now pray is, that Heaven may take you under its protection, and deliver you from your Troubles; what I am myself to undergo, is yet unknown to

Your affectionate Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.



LETTER XXVII.

Jasper Smith *Esq;* to Miss Gertrude Coningsby.

Jan. 28, 1740.

LET not my ever dear Miss Coningsby imagine, that I esteem her present Worth, intrinsically, at a lower Rate than before that
dire-

direful Accident beſel her. No, my Dear, had I but the leaſt ſubſiſting Notion of your Conſent to ſo atrocious a Fact, far would it be from me, you may aſſure yourſelf, to be ſo importunate in my preſent Application.

Ah ! my deareſt Creature, what I at preſent ſay, is, that as it hath ſo happened, and as it is beyond the Art of Man ever to rectify that Miſfortune, I would have you make the beſt you can of it, for your own Benefit.

You was ſo ingenuous, as not to lead me into the Hopes of a Fortune with you ; but then, the Perfections of my deareſt Miſs *Corningsby* would have amply compensated for that Defect ; and, was the Caſe otherwiſe than it is, I ſhould ſtill endeavour to reward her Merit, by immediately marrying her ; but as ſeveral of my Friends, who are no Strangers to my Courtſhip with her,

already have, and more and more daily will gain Hints of the dark Actions of that cursed Night, she can noways, I am certain, judge it reasonable or expedient, that after such a Tale hath taken Wind, I should immediately publish a Marriage with her. It would have a most disagreeable Aspect in the Eye of the World, at least, till Time shall have effaced it from their Memories; and then, my dear *Gatty* may command every Gratification of her Wishes from me.

I urge this, my Dear, that you may not run away with a Notion of myself judging worse of your Virtue than before; but give me leave to say, it will nevertheless depreciate you in the Eye of the World; and when once a young Lady is blown upon, say, how must she stand ever after in the Opinion of that World, for making a Wife to any Man, excepting myself,

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 155
self, who only am conscious of your
Innocence.

Now, as I am so candid to offer
you every Privilege of a Wife, at
present, saving the connubial Knot,
and with the Hope even of that
at a suitable Opportunity ; would
any one be so blinded, having but
a tolerable Opinion of my Person,
and Sincerity, to dissent from
the Offer I make you ? I pretend
no Right of Compulsion, you
must act as you please, Miss, but I
should hope, that having no For-
tune, or Friend but myself, you
would be so deeply read in your
own Interest, as to join Hand and
Heart to the Proposal of,

Your respectful Admirer,

JAS. SMITH.

LET



L E T T E R XXVIII.

*Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby, to Jasper
Smith, Esq;*

Jan. 28, 1740.

IF you was that Admirer of me, which you express yourself to be, why should my Misfortunes abate that Affection, which, cherished for me, could alone, elevate them? Can you love me the better for my Crimes? Nay, for an Accumulation of them? If *Mr. Smith* really is that worthy Man I have ever esteemed him, surely, he will not? But I see what it is you drive at, and fain would you glory, in my Wretchedness.

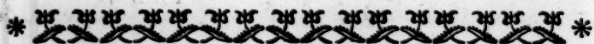
You say, your Friends know of your Courtship, and of my Disgrace.—Who informed them of either? That was a laudable, this
but

but a dishonourable Deed, be who will the Author of it. Alas! Sir, what are the Privileges of Marriage, without the Essentials? Or the Appendages of a Wife, without the true Title to that Name? It is not the Benefit of Bed and Board, that will make wrong right, or ease the loaded Conscience of a Burden daily increasing. I shudder too, to think who, and what, the Produce of our criminal Conversation may be called. My own Name will be familiarly repeated oft in this Town, whilst you only, in the Eye of the World, shall remain uncensured.

You seem too well informed, for my Felicity, of the Opinion I have of your personable Qualifications. I own, I have loved you, but build not upon that to my undoing. The least you can gratify me in, is to let me see you, that I may Face to Face, answer for myself

158 *The HISTORY of*
myself, as I then might hope
that Influence, you now deny me:
For I cannot comply with your
Request, till better satisfied, than
your Writings have rendered,

Your most unhappy,
GERT. CONINGSBY.



LETTER XXIX.

Jasper Smith, *Esq;* to Mrs. Gertrude Coningsby.

Jan. 30, 1740.

Madam,

THIS Paper Argument may be
protracted without End, unless
some peremptory Period is put
to it. You have heard my Reasons
against Marriage, which are indisputable,
nor can I retract them. I would
evidence every Kindness in my
Power to Miss *Coningsby*, consistent
with the Nature of her present

present Case. These you have heard, and if you please to accept the Conditions, three Words will conclude this Debate.

You know you are helpless of yourself, and pennyless but for me, and what my Affection prompts me to for your sake; choose you therefore, whether to cast yourself upon the wide World, for a Support, or into the Arms of him only, who still loves and adores you; the latter, backed by an easy Compliance, will ever warm to Tendernefs, an Heart most ready to receive you.

I expect your final Answer, either never to see you more, or joyfully to receive you for ever, into the longing Embraces of,

Dear Miss,

Your sincerest Admirer,

JAS. SMITH.

LET-

160 *The HISTORY of*

LETTER XXX.

*Mrs. Gertrude Conningsby, to
Jasper Smith, Esq;*

Jan. 30, 1740.

Sir,

I HAVE just received, and read
yours, but shall defer my Answer,
till I may be favoured with
the Delivery of it by Word of
Mouth.

GERT. CONINGSBY.

~~*****~~

LETTER XXXI.

*Miss Lavinia Rawlins, to Mrs:
Gertrude Coningsby.*

April 4, 1741.

Dear Gatty,

I AM at length, after long Travel,
and infinite Disappointments,
fixed, for some Time I hope, in
a Widow Lady's Family at *Ingle-*
ton,

ton. She has only two Daughters, and a Son, whose Time is mostly spent at the University. She keeps her Coach, and I am the sixth Servant, but my Employment is wholly about the young Ladies. There is a Coachman, and my Lady's Man, and Misses Man, or rather Boy about seventeen, with a Cook, and Chambermaid. It is one of the most sociable Families in the Universe, I believe; we have nothing passing but Good-humour, and Affability, from the highest to the lowest of us, and are as merry as the Day is long, in all manner of innocent Freedom: So that, barring now-and-then a scape Thought after my past Expectations, I am to the full as happy with my good Mrs. *W——s*, as ever I was in Mrs. *Robinson's* House; and, my Dear, there is one Comfort in my present Situation, that as I have nothing further

further to hope, I have as little to fear ; and could my whole Time but pass thus agreeably, no mortal could enjoy Life preferably to myself.

I desire to hear from you next Post, longing for an Account of your having discarded *Smith*, and that you are in some honest Way of Life, to get your Bread by : For I have been greatly distressed all this while, for your Welfare ; but never till now, knowing how you should direct to me, I could not crave an earlier Account of your Affairs.

I hear Mr. *Robinson* and his Lady are parted, after an Absence of full three Weeks, without the least Knowledge of his, where she was all the while.

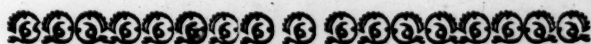
Send me some Account of *Sally Morris*, to whom I have not yet been able to send a Direction for me ; nor have I heard from her for
almost

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 163
almost these four Months, which
makes me very uneasy. I hope
she is in Place still. I saw old
Psalter the other Day, and o'my
Word, he wears admirably; and
more than that, *Alice* is mar-
ried to a Turner, he says, and
they go on very well. Thus,
having unpacked my Country Car-
goe, I am my dear *Gatty's*,

Most loving Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.

P. S. Direct to me at Madam
W——s, at *Ingleton*.



LETTER XXXII.

*Mrs. Gertrude Smith to Miss Lavi-
nia Rawlins.*

May 5, 1741.

PARTICULAR Engagements
having engrossed best part of
my time for some Weeks past, I
profess

profess to you, my dear *Lavy*, I have not had the least spare time upon my Hands for answering your last to me. Mr. *Smith* and I have made all up, and now Matters go on charmingly, being quite reconciled again; and you must, from henceforth, direct to me by the Name of *Smith*, at Mrs. G—'s, at the Golden ——— in *Dean-street, Soho*.

You could by no one thing have given me more Pleasure (saying that you was upon the Road to *London*) than in hearing you was so agreeably stationed at good Mrs. *W—'s*; for I had some little Knowledge of the Misses in my Mother's time. They will be charming Fortunes, I believe; for I remember Mr. *W—s* was reported to have died rich. I hope you will be settled for a time, and if you have but good Wages, the young Ladies, to be sure, will furnish you with Clothes, as much or
more

more than you can well dispense with.

I am vastly pleased to hear *Aly Psalter* is so well disposed of; she, my Dear, was, as I may say, one of us; poor *Aly*! I did not think she would have gone off before you, *Lavy*, not being half so handsome: For if you remember, you and I were always reckoned the best of the Bunch.

As for *Sally*, my Affairs not having called me near her Quarters for some time, I cannot say I have seen her since *Christmas* last, till about a Week ago, when, truly, I was never more at a Loss than for her Name, but that I had known her Face I was positive; for, my Dear, she is so sunk in her Flesh, hollow-eyed, pale, and, between you and me, so round about the Hips, that I protest I should have passed her, had she not stopped and spoke to me; but taking notice
how

how strangely she was altered in a short time, the Colour, which soon spread itself over her Cheeks, but too plainly indicated it to me, that some Trespas had been committed upon her Copyhold.

You may imagine, I could not charge her with it in the Street ; but she, observing my Eyes to play more downwards than at her Face, took me aside, desiring to know where my Lodgings were ; for that she had somewhat of Importance for my Ear, if I could let her know when it would be convenient to wait upon me. I replied, that I was never out till eleven, and, for the most part, drank Tea at home of an Afternoon, and my Lodgings were in such a Place.

She drank Tea with me the next Day in the Afternoon, that being her Leisure-time, she said ; and, in short, after a small Pause, burst into Tears. My dear *Sally*, said I, what troubles

troubles you ? why seem you so uneasy ? is it the Fear of losing your Place ? Or, is it the seeing me so much better provided for than yourself ? I hope you do not envy me. All in good time, it will be your Turn one of these Days. No, no, never, replied she. Alas ! dear *Gatty*, I am ruined.

I confess she struck me not a little, though I suspected what it would tend to ; when proceeding, she added, that she was with Child. I replied, I hoped she was married, and could produce a good Father for it. She said, that her Master's Son admiring her, and promising her Marriage at his Father's Death, she had been so foolish, as, at his earnest Importunity, to yield to his Desires, and was then about five Months gone with Child by him. I then demanded how she purposed to act in the Affair, for that it would be impossible to hide it much longer,
and

and, indeed, I told her, I could almost have sworn to her Condition the Day before.

She replied, her young Master was almost wild about it, for fear it should come to his Father's Ears; for not having the Command of Money enough to support her out of Service, in her Lying-in, she feared she could noways leave the Family till it was discovered, asking me what she had best do, to prevent the young Gentleman's Disgrace, who still daily promised, and swore he would marry her at last.

I own, the Affair was beyond my Ability to relieve her in, so that I recommended her to some abler Head than mine; but desired to see her often, that I might know what Turn it was like to take in the Family, for that I was amazed some or other of them had not as yet discovered it.

The

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 169

The poor Girl! returned with an heavy Heart, and what she will do, I cannot say; but certain I am, it will not much longer remain a Secret. I am,

Dearest Lavy,

Yours most sincerely,

GERT. SMITH.



L E T T E R XXXIII.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins to Mrs. Sarah Morris.

May 10, 1741.

Dear Sally,

IT is now so long since I heard from you, that, surely, I am either to conclude you dead and buried, or that your Memory will not serve for recollecting such a Person in being as your old Friend *Lavinia Rawlins*; or is it the Affair with Mr. *Thomas* that so totally im-

VOL. I.

I

merfes

merſes your Senſes in Jollity, as to occaſion the Neglect? For tho' I have long ſince left the Parſonage, yet I have often enquired whether any Letter was directed to me there, without Effect.

I thank my Stars, I am fallen into a plentiful Soil, as I preſume you are; and tho' *Gatty* is at preſent above us, through the Indulgence of her Admirer, the Captain; Time may ſerve, for its being our Turns; though if I never live worſe than at preſent, I ſhall have every Cauſe to be thankful.

Let me hear what Progreſs you have made in your Amour, and when I may wiſh you Joy; whether your Lover ſtill remains attached to you; and twenty other Particulars, all which, as whatever tends, but eventually, to my *Sally's* Intereſt, will ever be moſt acceptable, to her moſt

Loving Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.

LET-

L E T T E R XXXIV.

Miss Lavinia Rawlins to Mrs. Gertrude Smith.

May 14, 1741.

Dearest Mrs. Smith,

THOUGH your Business had been urgent for some Weeks, you made me some amends at your Leisure, by the length of your last Epistle; which partly proved agreeable, and partly, unpleasing to me; but though I wrote a Night or two ago to *Sally*, I did not hint at the Fruits of her Amour, nor shall I, till I have some Account of it from herself.

I rejoice, that you seem so thoroughly satisfied with Mr. *Smith's* Behaviour; but, pardon me,

I must not dismiss my Doubts, as to the Name you lay claim to ; for of all the Things you mention, I can find not the least Syllable of Matrimony amongst them. I shall remain uneasy till I have some Satisfaction in this: For in my Apprehension, you take less Notice than might be expected, had you been his lawful Wife ; and if you are not, why claim you his Name ? *Gatty ! Gatty !* surely, another sound of equal length, cannot comprehend you ! I should be sorry, was it so, for these Things are not to be reconciled to my Comprehension, without further Explanation. I tremble for you, lest a false Step having diverted you from the Path of Virtue, you should run riot for the Remainder of your whole Life, without recovering it again.

Be

LAVINIA RAWLINS. 173

Be ingenuous with me, let me into the very best, the very worst of what has happened. If my Advice can avail, you may command it; but however that may prove, your Counsel is secure in the Breast of

Your affectionate Friend,

LAV. RAWLINS.

I 3

LET-

L E T T E R XXXV.

Mrs. Smith, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

May 20, 1741.

My dear Lavy,

WHAT? turned Prophetess,
Child! Why, then hast
thou still thy Doubts about thee?
but I'll discharge them presently.

You know, *Lavy*, for that I
wrote you before you left the Par-
sonage, what I suffered that hellish
Night at the Masquerade: A Night,
I fear, never to be forgotten by
me; I wish, I may ever be able to
say without sorrow. You know
what succeeded to that, from Mr.
Smith's Letter to me, and my Answer
to it. Now then, to what followed.

It

It was a Day or two, before I heard from him again, during which Time, I was under a perpetual Torment, lest he should have totally withdrawn himself from me. However, at length, I had another Letter, much in the Strain with the former, making still passionate Professions of Love; advising me, for my own Benefit, since such an Accident had happened, and could not be recalled, to make the best of it.

He reminded me of my Want of Fortune, for which Defect, had I remained undefiled, my Person, with him, would have equivaled. The Thing began to be blazed, he said, and would depreciate me in the Eye of the World; after which, no Man would make a Wife of me. He would allow me all Privileges of his Wife, save Marriage, and hoped I would not be so overseen, as to refuse him.

My Answer was, as before, that it was not Bed and Board, that would make wrong right. I reminded him, what both myself, and Children must be called. I owned, I had loved him; but hoped he would not thereon build my undoing; and concluded, with desiring Satisfaction to my Scruples, from his own Mouth.

To the above, in a Day or two, he replied, that our Paper Argument might be endless; he said, his Reasons against Marriage were indisputable, nor could he retract.

He reminded me of my helpless State without his Aid, demanding, whether I thought best to surrender myself to him, or the Public. Then peremptorily insisted on my Resolution, never to see him more, or joyfully to fly to his Embraces.

My dear *Lavy*, I then stood in need of such a Friend as thou art;

a Friend disinterested, to have fixed my wandering Resolution to some solid Stand, and to have comforted me under my Despondencies ; but left to myself, what could I determine upon ! I dreaded more than Death, an absolute Privation of his Favours. I had tasted too deeply of the Cup of Delights he had ushered me to, ever willingly, to part with it from my Hand, more. I turned my Mind to Servitude, and would have dropped my Anchor there ; but the black Ocean that surrounded me, was more frightful than the Storm at large, I laboured in ; nor could I set my Hand to a Compliance with him, so opposite to what my Heart then dictated : I therefore wrote him Word, that my Answer to his last, should only be delivered to him by Word of Mouth,

This brought him to my Lodgings in the Evening ; when, after

the solemnest Protestations of everlasting Fidelity, the Shock of reverting, without a Farthing in my Purse, to my late Condition of seeking Service, after rioting in Pleasures, even to profusion, recurring to my Mind, Oh! can I utter it! *Lavy!* guess the rest.

He took me the Lodging I am now in, the next Day, very compleatly furnished; hired me a Maid Servant, and having set me out as genteely with Clothes, and Linen, as his own Lady need have been, he allows me three Guineas a-Week for my Pocket, and Provisions, besides which, three or four times a-Week, he Dines, or Sups with me; when he provides, at his own Expence, somewhat nicer than my ordinary Fare, and frequently orders in Wines, Tea, Sugar, and such other little Helps, as make the Expences of my House-keeping, fit very light
and

and easy; insomuch, that I have within this first Quarter, all Charges defrayed, laid up above twelve Guineas.

Thus, my dearest Friend, have I faithfully stated my Case to you, and was he but my Husband, no Woman's Life could draw my Envy upon her; but the contrary Reflection, in my serious Moments, deadens every presenting Satisfaction, and makes me miserable; though I hope this will wear off, for I find it lessen daily.

Blame me not, *Lavy*, to an Excess, past a Participation of your contemned Friendship; for consider! dear *Lavy*! the Force of my Temptation to this Course; abandoned by all the World, no Friend at hand to assist me, a Stranger in Town, Pennyless, and liable only to Contempt from my Fellow-Creatures; what then would you, a far more prudent Woman

180 *The HISTORY of*

Woman than I am, have done, otherwise than I did? especially, under such Engagements, never to forsake you? Nor indeed, have I hitherto ever had any Reason for suspecting him; tho' he never spends more than three Nights in a Week with me.

If you should ever come to *London, Lavy*, let me see you; for I can procure Room for you in our House, where no one can ever be more welcome, than my dearest *Lavy*,

To her unfortunate,

but sincere Friend,

GERT. SMITH.

P. S. He has given me leave to assume his Name, for the better Look of the Thing in the Neighbourhood. I have inclosed his and my last Letters.

LET.

LETTER XXXVI.

Mrs. Smith, to Miss Lavinia Rawlins.

June 5, 1741.

I AM under the most afflicting Consternation for Cousin *Sally*, my Dear, that ever yet assailed me; nor know I what to do, or which Way to turn me. O! that I had but my dearest *Lavy* at my Elbow, to consult and advise with, for my Behaviour in this Dilemma! But why do I detain you from the Circumstance itself, that overwhelms me thus with Sorrow!

I wrote you Word of *Sally's* Slip with her young Master; it is all now come to light, and her Reputation ruined for ever. Her Lady, from several Symptoms,
mis-

mistrusting her Condition; so sharply, and suddenly took her to task, that having no possible Means at hand, for coming off, she was obliged to admit the Fact, and that the Infant she then bore was her young Master's.

This set her Lady into such a Rage, as half distracted her; but away she flew to Sir *Thomas* with the News, who impatient of further Particulars, ordered *Sally* before him instantly; where having examined her, and the Case but too plainly appearing, he charged her with the Perversion of his Son's Morals, by her Delusions, and swore he would have her committed to the House of Correction for a Prostitute; then after several other Threats and Menaces, he ordered her to her Garret, and by no Means to stir from thence till he recalled her.

His

His Lady and he then entered into close Consultation, how to behave with their Son; but whilst they were under this Debate, *Sally*, in her March to her Confinement, met Mr. *Thomas* coming out of his own Room, upon the two Pair of Stairs Floor; who observing her under such Distress, and weeping so dismally, demanded the Occasion of it?

They had scarce gained more Time together than might barely serve for his Information, before Mr. *Thomas* himself was summoned before his Father, and her Ladyship; but the little they had gained, had been so well employed by Mr. *Thomas*, to his own Ends, that by his Entreaties, and the fairest Promises of great Things to come, he had prevailed for a Retraction of all that she had before charged him with, and for laying the Child
upon

184 *The HISTORY of*
upon *James*, one of his Father's
Footmen.

The young Gentleman relying thus upon his Interest in her, approached his Father with far less Concern upon his Countenance, than otherwise he would have had, or indeed than became his then present Circumstances; and upon its being demanded by his Father, how he could be guilty of such a disreputable Action? seemed vastly surpris'd at the Charge upon him, protested his Innocence, and was perswaded he said, that was he but to confront her, the Wench could never have the Impudence to charge him with it; and for the clearing of his Character in the Affair, intreated Sir *Thomas* to sift it to the Bottom, nor suffer him to lie under so scandalous an Imputation, nor ways his Due.

Poor

Poor *Sally*, upon this, being again produced, thoughtlessly, and still to retain Mr. *Thomas* a Friend, in the Excess of Confusion she was under in his Presence, being again interrogated as to the Father of her Child, begged her young Master's Pardon for the Error at her first Examination, and laid the Child upon *James*, as Mr. *Thomas* had directed her.

Sally now expected that all had been over, and that, as her young Master had before insinuated to her, she should only have been turned out of the Family, when he had engaged to provide for herself and the Child, till the happy Day should arrive for his marrying her; but now, she found herself hampered beyond all possibility of Extrication, for no sooner had Sir *Thomas* provided another Father than his own Son for the Infant, than he took her directly before the next Magistrate,

strate, where, under the blackest Impressions of Horror, and under an almost Ignorance of what she did, the Book being given her, she was obliged to swear the Child to *James*, and at her Return was dismissed the Family.

James was soon taken into Custody by the Parish-Officers, who insisted upon Security for the Maintenance of the Mother and Child ; but this not happening till a Day or two afterwards, Sir *Thomas* had sent his Son into the Country, to avoid the Censures he might be liable to from the Accident.

James protested his Innocence before the Magistrate, as to the Crime objected to him ; but that availing nothing against a positive Oath, the Justice threatened to commit him, in default of good Security. *James* having, for several Years, behaved himself unblame-

blameably in Sir *Thomas's* Service, wanted not Friends amongst his Tradesmen, two of whom became his Sureties for appearing at the Sessions, so that he being now admitted to bail, returned home again.

The Affair being now noised through the Family, and that *James* had been the Transgressor, most of his Fellow-servants (as it too frequently happens in such Cases) had their Jokes upon him, all but *Mary*, his Lady's Chamber-maid, who observing the Man to be so played upon, let him into what Insight she had into the Mystery; but as *James* might possibly have been meddling, as well as her young Master, she resolved to be as certain as she could of that, before she proceeded to her Discoveries.

She premised her Discourse with a Demand of his dealing ingenuously
with

with her, and faithfully replying to a Question she should put to him, which, if he would sincerely do, she doubted not of offering somewhat greatly advantageous to him. The Fellow then protesting solemnly that he would, she demanded, whether he had ever been actually guilty with *Sally* or not? when, with the most serious Protestations, he made her sensible of his Innocence, by the Conviction she received from his Veracity.

James, said she, it were a base thing in me to sit idle, whilst my Fellow-servant is condemned of a Crime I myself in my Conscience must acquit him of. *Sally* and I, thou knowest, have been Bed-fellows ever since she came to my Master's, and our Humours having been agreeable to each other, no two Girls upon Earth can have confided more in each other than we two have done.

I have, for some Months suspected her to have been with Child, well knowing she had been very great with our young Master, nay, I taxed her with my Surmises, when she not only not burdened you with the Name of its Father, but assured me that he was, and that the Correspondence had been prosecuted between them, from almost her first coming into the Family. Nay, she has many times acquainted me of her Assignations with him, and many and many have been the Nights that she has quitted my Bed for his, when the whole House have been asleep.

This, *James*, added she, I think highly becoming you to make proper Use of, by having her re-examined as to these Facts; and tho' the Loss of my Place may depend upon it, I am resolved to appear in defence of the Truth to serve you.

No

No sooner had *James* furnished himself with these Materials, than away to the Justice for Advice ; who again ordering *Sally* before him, charged her point-blank with the Discovery *Mary* had made. This she was about to have stiffly denied ; upon which *Mary* was called in, to oppose her Face to Face, who recollecting not only Times, but several other Circumstances, poor *Sally* was so thunder-struck, that she not only confessed the Fact, and that she had been over-persuaded by her young Master to accuse *James*, but submitted to swear the Child to the former.

James had retained a Solicitor to recover him out of this Scrape, who now having so fair an Handle to proceed upon, indicted both *Sally* and her young Master for a Conspiracy against his Client ; whereupon the young Gentleman was sent for
to

to Town, and *Sally* committed to *New-Prison*, where the poor Creature now remains, in an almost starving Condition.

I have supplied her with what little Matters I can spare for her immediate Subsistence; but what will become of her upon her Trial, I am shocked to consider, or how she will be ever able to get through it. She is in such a miserable Place, that though I alighted one Day at the Door, with Intent to have entered and comforted her; a slight View of its Inhabitants, so deterred me from proceeding further, that sending her in a Crown by the Keeper, I was retiring again, when the Master of the Place, offering me the Speech of her in the Lodge; I spent above an Hour with her, in which time she related to me the several above Particulars.

192 *The HISTORY, &c.*

I am almost spent with writing,
so must conclude myself,

Dear Lavy,

Your most sincere Friend,

GERT. SMITH.

P. S. If you can think of any thing
beneficial to the poor Girl, dear
Lavy, inform me.

The END of the FIRST VOLUME:



g,

h.

g
r

: